

JEEVADHARA

A JOURNAL OF CHRISTIAN INTERPRETATION

PURUSARTHAS

ARTHA AND KAMA IN THE TRADITIONS OF INDIA

K. Luke

DHARMA, THE GREAT GOAL OF LIFE

Jacob Kattackal

MOKSA AS THE ULTIMATE GOAL

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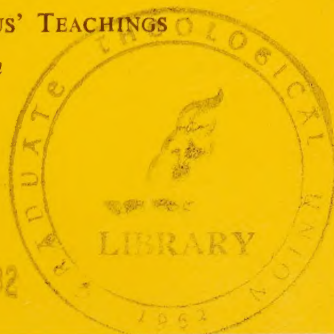
THE CHRISTIAN PURUSARTHAS :
MEANING AND GOALS OF LIFE IN JESUS' TEACHINGS

George M. Soares-Prabhu

DISCUSSION FORUM

Sebastiar. Athapilly

JUN 23 1982



Jeevadhara
is published in English and Malayalam

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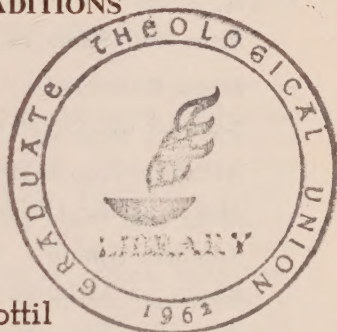
PURUSARTHAS: MEANING AND GOALS
OF LIFE IN INDIAN TRADITIONS

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No. 67-72

1982

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CONTENTS

	Page
Editorial	3
K. Luke	
<i>Artha</i> and <i>Kāma</i> in the Traditions of India	5
Jacob Kattackal	
<i>Dharma</i> , the Great Goal of Life	27
Abraham Koothottil	
<i>Mokṣa</i> as the Ultimate Goal	35
Subhash Anand	
<i>Bhakti</i> : a <i>Meta-Puruṣārtha</i>	52
George M. Soares-Prabhu	
The Christian <i>Puruṣārthas</i> :	
Meaning and Goals of Life in Jesus' Teachings	69
Sebastian Athappilly	
Discussion Forum	86

Themes for 1982

The following are the themes of subsequent issues:

March-April	: Indian Biblical Hermeneutics
May-June	: Jesus as Teacher
July-August	: Towards an Indian Ecclesiology
September-October	: Pilgrimage and Holy Places
November-December	: Conflict Morality

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Editorial

The pursuit of meaning is an important aspect of the search for fuller being. Just as no individual has the key to the fulness of being, no tradition or culture possesses in isolation all the secrets of the real and ultimate meaning of life. Also the meaning of life is not something that exists already in all clarity, but something to be created and organized from all that is given within the integral human situation.

This is the basic impetus behind the studies presented in this issue of *Jeevadhara*. It deals with the meaning and goals of human life as it has been understood and lived in the major traditions of India from time immemorial. The *puruṣarthas* form an integral part of Indian world view. They are enumerated either in the order of *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*, or of *kāma*, *artha*, *dharma* and *mokṣa*. It is the latter order which is followed in our study. *Kāma* and *artha* are more immediate to the individual, and *dharma* comes in when the individual is related to the community as well as to the basic order of the universe of which he is a part. *Mokṣa*, however, points to the transcendental dimension of human life in its pursuit of *kāma* and *artha* and the other goals of life.

K. Luke introduces the study of the *puruṣarthas* by dealing with *artha* and *kāma* as these are understood and accepted in the Vedic tradition and its cognate Iranian tradition of Zoroastrian inspiration. He points out that Zarathushtra preached the maintenance of life rather than renunciation. The same positive attitude towards life is also the legacy of the Indian traditions, especially with regard to *kāma*, the sexual urge. Luke's study brings to limelight how "the Hindu was able to have a holistic approach to sex, so that there was no dichotomy between the enjoyment of sex and the quest after union with the Absolute..."

J. Kattackal discusses summarily *dharma* and its place among the *puruṣarthas*. Searching for the "why" of practising *dharma*, the author arrives at the Upaniṣadic dictum: *tat tvam asi* (That thou art), which means to show that ultimately morality is based on reality, ethics on ontology.

Mokṣa, the ultimate goal, is dealt with by A. Koothottil within the framework of the Upaniṣadic world view. Pointing

out the metaphysical and sociological implications of the doctrine of *mokṣa*, he contents that it can "become a powerful gospel towards the realization of a just society in the world" which should be the ultimate goal of our collective striving.

These are the four goals of human life found in the age-old traditions of India. They seem to be mutually exclusive, but in the synthesizing spirit of India and in its holistic and positive approach to all the aspects of life, these have come to be harmonized. However, the complex traditions of Indian thought is not exhausted by the four *puruṣārthas* as far as the meaning and goals of life are concerned. There is for example the *bhakti* tradition which is very much alive and followed by a vast majority as the safest way to reach fulfilment. Subhash Anand presents *bhakti* as a *meta-puruṣārtha*, in the sense that it is the most effective means to attain the four *puruṣārthas*.

If Subash Anand has attempted a blending of Indian traditions with diverse orientations, the article of George Soares-Prabhu takes this approach still further over to the Christian traditions. He tries to see what could be pointed out as the Christian *puruṣārthas*. Noting well the similarity between *kāma-artha-dharma* and the Christian religious vows, chastity-poverty-obedience, Soares points out that Jesus' attitude towards the earthly realities was more positive than that of the later traditions of Christianity, specially the monastic one. Any way the ultimate value of Christian life is love and the ultimate goal of human existence here and now is the creation of a more humane world.

The study of the four *puruṣārthas* of Indian traditions reveals the positive and wholesome attitude nurtured by the Indians towards life. Not that this was always the case in all the ramifications of Indian traditions. But as a whole, the Indian approach to life was less inhibited and did not stray too far away from the total human person, for whom the temporal pursuit such as the possession of wealth and the enjoyment of sex were equally important as his spiritual goal. In fact, when the whole human being is taken into account, the one is meaningless without the other and vice versa.

Besides the articles on the *puruṣārthas*, this issue of *Jeevadhara* carries also a discussion article.

Artha and Kama in the Traditions of India

Thinkers in ancient India, after prolonged reflection on the meaning and purpose of life, have propounded the doctrine of *puruṣārtha*⁻¹, a doctrine that is quite well known to all readers. The sources at times make mention of *trivarga*⁻², "the triad of aims", namely, *artha*-, "wealth", *kāma*-, "love", and *dharma*-, "righteousness", as the highest good here on

1. This is a classical expression which literally means "any object of human striving, human effort", etc., and when used adverbially *puruṣārtham* conveys the nuance "for the sake of man, on account of man". Numerous treatises dealing with the goals of life have been drawn up in the course of time: e. g. *Puruṣārthakaumudī*, -*cintāmanī* -*prabodha*, and so forth. For details, cf. M. Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (repr., Oxford, 1970) p. 637; cf. too P. V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra* (5 vols. in 8 parts; Government Oriental Series, Poona, 1930-72) V/2 pp. 1510f., 1626-32. A good orientation into the general background of our question is given by H. Bechert-G. von Simson (ed.), *Einführung in die Indologie. Stand. Methoden. Aufgaben* (Darmstadt, 1979) §§ 129-131 (pp. 174-81). J. D. M. Derret, *Dharmaśāstra and Related Ideas* (Essays in Classical and Hindu Law 1, Leiden, 1976).

2. We have here another classical expression; compare *trajīmaya*-, "intent on the three goals of life". The *Mahābhārata* (abbr. MB) invariably speaks of the three goals of life; we read in *Sānti Parvan* 167: "Dharma, artha and kāma should all be equally attended to... He is the best who attends to all the three"; We are told in the *Anuśāsana Parvan* 111: "Dharma, artha, kāma - these constitute the fruit of life". In this paper texts from the great epic are generally cited from the English version of K. M. Ganguli, *The Mahabharata* (12 vols., 4th ed., Delhi, 1980); for the passages quoted in this note, cf. Ganguli, *MB VIII*, p. 368, and *MB XI*, p. 226. Here and there we have slightly changed Ganguli's translation.

earth; *mokṣa*-³, "liberation, emancipation", is not included in the list, but it is not denied or called into doubt: being something of the other world, it is sharply distinguished from what has to do with life in this world. We shall, in this paper, try to single out some of the more salient ideas regarding wealth and love scattered here and there in the Hindu scriptures. The sacred writings furnish us with copious data, to do justice to which one will have to write a couple of monographs; the present study is therefore only suggestive and provisional.

I

The word *artha*-⁴ attests a rich variety of meanings: 1) aim, purpose;⁵ 2) cause motive, reason; 3) advantage, use, utility;⁶ 4) thing, object, objects of sense; 5) the penis.

3. This common word, occurring in the Brāhmaṇas (but not in the four Vedas) is created from the root *muc*- with the help of the formative -s-; compare the desiderative stem *mokṣay*- (*mokṣayati*) "to set free, deliver, draw out of", frequent in the classical language. On its formation, cf. A. Thumb-R. Hauschild, *Handbuch des Sanskrit* (11 vols., Indogermanische Bibliothek. I. Reihe: Lehr- und Handbücher, 3rd ed., Heidelberg, 1953-59) I/2 § 601 a (pp. 349f.); cf. too § 459 Anm. 1 (p. 232). The base *muc*-, "to release, let go, deliver from", which is part of the vocabulary of the first Veda (cf. H. Grassmann, *Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda* [4th ed., Wiesbaden 1964] cols. 1047-50), is the Aryan variant of Indo-European (abbr. IE) (s) *meuk*- / (s) *meug*-, whose derivatives are too many to be listed here.

4. The form just cited is the masculine one, which occurs in books 1-9 of the first Veda, but there is also the neuter one *artham*, used six times in book 10 along with the masculine (three times). For references, cf. Grassmann, *op. cit.*, col. 114. In later literature the form that is exclusively employed is the masculine one.

5. There are the idiomatic expressions *artham* (e. g., *Damayantyartham*, "for the sake of Damayanti"), *arthena*, *arthāya*, and *arthe*, "for the sake of, on account of, on behalf of".

6. In this sense the word is used with *kāma* and *dharma*- (*kāmārtha*-, *dharmārtha*-) to denote the advantage one derives from the pursuit of these two goals of life: cf. J. Wackernagel-A. Debrunner, *Altindische Grammatik* (3 vols. in 4 parts, Göttingen, 1892-1957) II/2, § 71 (p. 166).

membrum virile;⁷ 6) wealth, prosperity, money; 7) affair, concern, business; 8) lawsuit, action; 9) manner, kind; 10) sense, meaning, notion; 11) prohibition, prevention; 12) price.⁸ From the etymological point of view, *artha-* is a compound consisting of the base *ar-* and the suffix *-tha-* which is itself made up of *-t-* plus the laryngeal *H* and *-a-*; the laryngeal disappeared, and in compensation *-t-* came to be made aspirate.⁹ This is too complicated a matter to be discussed in this modest study, and so let us now see what *ar-* means.

Indo-Iranian *ar-* goes back to Indo-European *er-*, which originally meant "to set in motion, arouse, excite, stimulate" etc., nuances which are actually attested by the derivatives of the root in the historical languages of the Indo-European family¹⁰; compare, for example, Sanskrit *ṛcchati*, "goes towards, attacks, reaches", etc., and *ṛṇoti* (= Avestan *ərənaoiti*, "arises, moves", etc.,¹¹ Hittite *arnuzi*, "sets in motion",¹² and so on.

7. Many a reader may not be aware that the three male organs (the penis and the testicles) were deified by the ancient Brahmans and offerings used to be made to them. According to the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (11: 1: 6: 31), "The three after-offerings are the three male organs, and that which is the chief after-offering is, as it were, the chief 'organ'; cf. J. Egeling, *The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 5 vols., (The Sacred Books of the East 12, 26, 41, 43, 44, repr., Delhi 1977) V. p. 19.

8. Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 90. We may also cite here the expression *dārārtha-*, "wife and wealth", occurring in the sources; cf. Wackernagel-Debrunner, *op. cit.* § 71 (p. 166).

9. T. Burrow, *The Sanskrit Language* (The Great Languages, 2nd ed., London, 1965) p. 165 (where further examples are given); compare too Wackernagel-Debrunner, *op. cit.*, § 534t (p. 719).

10. J. Pokorny, *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* (2 vols., Bern, 1949-59) I, pp. 326-32 (cf. p. 327).

11. C. Bartholomae, *Altiranisches Wörterbuch* (repr., Berlin, 1961) cols. 183f. M. Mayrhofer, *Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen* (3 vols., Indogermanische Bibliothek. II. Reihe: Wörterbücher, Heidelberg, 1953-75) I, pp. 119, 122.

We wish also to note here that Avestan attests *arətha-* (= *artha-*) and *anarətha-* (= *anartha-*), and the special meaning the former has in the Zoroastrian scriptures may be gathered from the following passages: "Take you heed of these *arəthā* (goals) of mine, which I shall enact" (Yasna 33:8); "He (the Wise Lord) attended me with good thinking, in order that the *arəthā* (goals) of my wish be known" (Yasna 43:13).¹³ Etymologically, therefore, *artha-* is striving, a movement towards a thing, goal or purpose, that which is striven after, and from this basic meaning are derived the various nuances listed in the previous paragraph. As one of the *puruṣārthas*, *artha* signifies wealth, riches, etc.

When we turn to the *Ṛgveda* (abbr. RV), the earliest record of ancient Aryan tradition, we find that the Aryans had a zest for life, a positive attitude towards the material world and the good things with which it abounds.¹⁴ The blessings they were regularly praying for were long life, a large progeny, possession of as many cows and horses as possible, victory over foes, and the like; they desire to possess all this hundredfold, nay even thousandfold: "O Indu,¹⁵ bring us wealth in steeds and cattle hundredfold; bring wealth, O Soma, thousandfold" (RV 9:67:6); "For you yourself, O Indu, god, to every mortal worshipper, attract riches thousandfold, made manifest in hundred forms" (RV 9:98:4). The pious man with whom Agni is pleased, "gains abundant wealth with sons and horses, with heroes, and with kine for his well-being" (RV 5:4:11).

12. J. Friedrich, *Hethitisches Wörterbuch* (Indogermanische Bibliothek..., Heidelberg, 1952) p. 32 (where two other special meanings too are given).

13. Cited (with slight modifications) from S. Insler, *The Gāthās of Zarathustra* (Acta Iranica, troisième série, textes et mémoires, vol. 1, Leiden, 1975).

14. Luke, "Terrestrial Realities: the Tradition of the Aryans", *Jeevadhara* (1978) pp. 159-80.

15. In Sanskrit *indu-* means both "moon" and "drop", and there is nothing unusual in a poet's personifying the soma drops and in visualizing them as the moon; a reference to the name Indra is not to be excluded.

In the original text corresponding to "wealth", there is the substantive *rayi*,¹⁶ which is part of the favourite vocabulary of the poets of the first Veda; they employ other terms too such as *draviṇa-*, "property, good riches", and *vasu-*, "good, wealth, property". The first term, *rayi-* (also *rai-*)¹⁷ is related to Latin *rēs*, "thing, possession", and both the words presuppose the base *reHi-* (in the case of the verb *reH-*). Avestan attests the adjectival forms *raēvant-* (= Sanskrit *revant-*), "rich, majestic", and *raēvastāna-*, "very rich".¹⁸ The next word, *draviṇa-* (neuter), corresponds to Avestan *dravonah-*, "portion one gets as inheritance",¹⁹ and *vasu* (neuter) has as its cognates Hittite *assu-*²⁰ Greek *eus* (also *ēus*), Avestan *vohu*,²¹ etc., all these forms going back to Indo-European *wes-*²² "to be bright, lightsome, numinous", and hence also "to be good", and so on.

The tradition of the RV must be studied along with that of the Zoroastrian scriptures, the Avesta. The remarkable

16. Generally masculine, and occasionally also feminine.

17. Grassmann, *Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda*, cols. 1149f.

18. Cf. too *raēvas-cithra-*, "of wealthy origin, of noble lineage" (Bartholomae *Altiranisches Wörterbuch* cols. 1484f.).

19. Bartholomae, *op.cit.*, cols. 769f. The etymology of this common Aryan term is not clear (Mayrhofer, *Wörterbuch des Altindischen* II, p. 74).

20. Friedrich, *Hethitisches Wörterbuch*, p. 37. In Hittite our word is used as an adjective ("good, useful, beneficial, pleasing"), adverb ("well"), noun ("goodness, well-being, welfare, goods, possession" and exclamation ("hail")).

21. Two points are to be noted to understand this important Iranian term: first, *s* generally becomes *h* in Iranian (cf. *asura-* = *ahura-*); second, the vowel *a*, after labials which are immediately followed by a syllable containing *u* or *o*, becomes *o* (Sanskrit *makṣu-* = Avestan *mokshu-*, "soon, quickly"). There are too other forms which are too complicated to explain here.

22. Pokorny, *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* I, pp. 1174f.

thing about Zarathushtra,²³ the great prophet and reformer of Iran, is that "he suggests no renunciation, he preaches the maintenance of life",²⁴ for which wealth is absolutely necessary. The Zoroastrian point of view is best represented by Vidēvdāt 3:31-33 which purports to be the answer given by God to the question regarding the essence of the Zoroastrian religion.²⁵ This section is then, a revelation concerning the very core of the Zoroastrian faith.

The revelatory word runs thus:²⁶ "He who sows corn, sows holiness; he makes the law of Mazdah grow higher and higher; he makes the law of Mazdah as fat as he can with acts of adoration a thousand oblations, ten thousand sacrifices. When the barley is coming forth, the Daēvas²⁷ start up; when corn is growing rank, then faint the Daēvas' hearts; when corn is being ground, the Daēvas groan; when wheat is coming forth, the Daēvas are destroyed. In that house they can no longer stay, from that house they are beaten away, wherein wheat is thus coming forth. It is as though red hot iron were turned about in their throats, when there is plenty of corn... No one who does not eat, has strength to do works of holiness, strength to do works of husbandry, strength to beget children. By eating every material creature lives, by not eating it dies

23. This is the proper form of the prophet's name, which probably means "he who drives camels" (cf. Sanskrit *uṣṭra-*, "camel"; Zoroaster is the form popularized by the Greeks.

24. J. Duchesne-Guillemin, *The Hymns of Zarathustra* (Beacon Press paperback, Boston, 1963). p. 160.

25. "Essence" is the rendering of *uruthvan-* (also *uruthvar-*), literally, "belly, abdomen, viscera", and metaphorically, 'what is within, kernel' (Bartholomae, *Altiranisches Wörterbuch*, cols. 1531 f.).

26. Cited from J. Darmsteter, *The Zend-Avesta* (3 vols., The Sacred Books of the East 4, 23, 31, repr., Delhi, 1974) I, pp. 29f.

27. That is, the devas who, in Iranian tradition, are demons, whereas the asuras who became demons in India, were gods in Iran. The development of these notions has not yet been satisfactorily explained.

away". As a definition of true religion this passage is unique: he alone is the true worshipper of God who by his labour brings about an increase of the means of sustenance, and hereby he even causes the destruction of the principle of evil.

The opening statement, in the original *yo yaom kārāyeiti ho aśam kārāyeiti*, 'He who sows corn, sows holiness', deserves to be specially investigated. The second word in the text is the accusative singular of *yava* -, "corn", a term occurring also in the RV,²⁸ and the grain thus called used to be cultivated by tillers of the land as staple food. The next word is the verb, an iterative present, third person singular, from the root *kar* -, "to scatter, spread out", and hence also "to plough, plant".²⁹ In the English version "holiness" renders *aśem*, accusative singular of *aśa* -, literally, "truth", which corresponds exactly to *ṛta* -, one of the key words of the first Veda.³⁰ As a dogmatic concept of the Avesta, truth signifies everything that is connected with the true God and his kingdom. What the passage cited above affirms is that the person who engages in agriculture and produces much grain contributes to the establishment of God's kingdom here on earth, and to the elimination of the principle of evil. Riches have therefore a positive part to play in man's life.

We shall bring this section to a close with a few words about the position of the *Dharmaśāstras*³¹ regarding wealth.

28. A. A. Macdonell - A. B. Keith, *Vedic Index of Names and Subjects* (2 vols., repr., Delhi, 1967) II, p. 187.

29. Avestan attests too the verb *karsaiti* (= Sanskrit *karṣati*), from *kars-*, "to make furrows plough".

30. The Sanskrit word too must be rendered "truth", as demonstrated by Heinrich Lüders in his posthumously edited work *Varuṇa* I - II (Göttingen, 1951 - 58).

31. A distinction is to be made between the *Dharmaśāstras*, works in prose which are chronologically earlier, and the *Dharmaśāstras*, compilations in verse form which date from a late period in history, and of which the most celebrated is the code of Manu; short introduction to the subject with bibliographical indications in H. Bechert - G. von Simson, *Einführung in die Indologie*, § 129 (pp. 174 - 77).

Manu (2:224) lists the various views about the goals of life held by different authorities: the chief good consists in the acquisition of spiritual merit (*dharma*-) and wealth; a diametrically opposed opinion is that it consists in the gratification of desire (*kāma*-) and the acquisition of wealth; a further position is that spiritual merit alone is the highest good but Manu on his part feels that it consists in the aggregate of all the three elements. He sees too *artha* as a value of human life, and he is so much convinced of its importance that he condemns to hell those who, without fulfilling their obligations here on earth, embrace *sannyāsa* (6:36 f.).

The *Dharmaśāstras* speak at length of property, its acquisition, etc., of agriculture, of cattle, and so on, and in all these instances they visualize *artha* as a value of human life here on earth. They also take for granted that the amassing of wealth must be done according to the norms of justice and equity, and that virtue is superior to everything else. The Gautama Dharmaśāstra remarks that one should not let the three parts of the day, morning, noon and evening, remain fruitless with regard to *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*, and the highest importance should be given to the first (2:46 f.). Those, however, who followed the materialistic philosophy of life were convinced that *artha* was the highest good; compare the remark of Kauṭilya *arthamūlau hi dharmakāmaṇi* (1 : 7), "Artha is the source of *dharma* and *kāma*".³²

A last detail we would like to mention is that the Anuśāsana Parvan of the MB (141:76-80) distinguishes *dharma* into *pravṛttilakṣaṇa*-, "characterized by activity", and *nivṛttilakṣaṇa*-, "characterized by abstention from activity", and while the former pertains to the man in the world, the latter is proper to the world-renouncer, and leads to final liberation. The householder who has to be engaged in *pravṛtti*-, "activity", must acquire wealth, which should then be divided into three portions; one part should be spent for the sake of *dharma*.

32. R. P. Kangle, *The Kauṭīliya Arthaśāstra* (2 vols. University of Bombay Studies in Sanskrit, Prakrit and Pali No. 1-2, Bombay 1969-72).

another for the fulfilment of *kāma*, and the third must be made to increase. Increase of wealth is, then, part of man's life of activity.³³

The common word *kāma*- (masculine) has in the ancient sources a rich variety of nuances: 1) wish, desire, longing; 2) love, affection; 3) object of pleasure, love; 4) enjoyment of sexual love, sensuality; 5) love personified, the god of love; 6) a stake in gambling; 7) a species of mango tree; 8) a metre.³⁴ The feminine form *kāmā*- and the neuter one *kāmam* too are attested, and the latter has the meanings "object of desire", and "semen virile". Lastly reference must be made to the adverbial use of *kāmam* (which is really the accusative singular of the masculine form), "according to wish/desire/pleasure, at will, freely, preferably", etc.

The word is of Indo-Iranian or common Aryan origin, for it is found in the earlier and later parts of the Avesta³⁵ and in the inscriptions of the Persian emperors,³⁶ and the meanings are invariably "wish, desire", etc. To give the reader some idea of the Avestan usage we quote two texts: "Therefore those whom you do know... to be just,... for them do you fulfill their *kāmam* (longing) with these attainments" (Yasna 28:10); "Yes, I have already realized you to be virtuous,... when he attended me with good thinking, in order that the goals *kāmahiya* (= *kāmasya*, of my wish) be known" (Yasna 43:13).³⁷

Viewed etymologically *kāma*- consists of the primary suffix *-ma-*³⁸ and the base *kā* which occurs in Latin *cā-rus*, "dear, beloved", Old High German *huor*, *huora*, "harlot" Anglo-Saxon *hōre* (= New English *whore*), Old Irish *carac*,

33. Ganguli, *MB* XI, p. 294.

34. Monier - Williams, *Sanskrit - English Dictionary*, p. 271.

35. Bartholomae, *Altiranisches Wörterbuch*, col. 463.

36. R. G. Kent, *Old Persian Grammar Text Lexicon* (American Oriental Series 33, 2nd ed., New Haven 1953) p. 179.

37. Cf. n. 13 above.

38. Wackernagel-Debrunner, *Altindische Grammatik* II/2, § 596a (p. 749); § 596d (p. 750).

“friend”, Gallic *Carantus* (personal name with the initial vowel shortened), Latvian *kāmēt*, “to hunger”, etc.³⁹ There is in Indo Aryan the root *kam-*, “to desire love”, which it has been held, is a secondary formation from the substantive *kāma-*,⁴⁰ but one cannot be too sure about this point.

The literary tradition concerning *kāma-* is very old, going back to the age of the RV, and in that remote period there were men who were wont to visualize desire as one of the primordial principles. RV 10:129, the creation hymn commencing with the statement that in the beginning there was neither non-being nor being but only *tad ekam*,⁴¹ the one principle transcending all opposites (vv. 1 f.), refers to desire: *kāmas tad agre sam avartatadhi* (v. 4), “Thereafter rose desire in the beginning”, yes, desire which proved to be *manso retah prathamam*, “thought’s (or mind’s) first seed”. By introducing *kāma* into the work of creation, the poet is depicting the origin of things as an act of begetting.⁴²

In the Atharvaveda *kāma* has undergone apotheosis and emerged as a god to whom people offer sacrifice and pray for

39. Full list of correspondences in Pokorny, *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* I, p. 515.

40. Thus Bartholomae, *Altiranisches Wörterbuch*, col. 463 (n. 3, sub voce *kāma-*); for the same view, cf. J. Kurylowicz, *Indogermanische Grammatik* (4 vols., Indogermanische Bibliothek. I. Reihe: Lehr- und Handbücher, Heidelberg, 1968ff.) II, § 262 (p. 204).

41. In *tad ekam* the first word, which is the Aryan modification of IE *tod* (cf. Greek *to*, Latin *tud* in *is-tud*, from earlier *is-tod*, etc.), is the demonstrative pronoun pointing to the undefined, undifferentiated, pre-existent entity designated as *ekam* (from IE *oi-ko-m*), “one”; what is hereby meant is “das ursprüngliche Chaos, die grosse Leere” (“primaeval chaos, the great void); thus K. F. Geldner, *Der Rig Veda* (3 vols., Harvard Oriental Series 33-35, Harvard, 1951) III, p. 360. In the passage under consideration the first principle is visualized as something impersonal (for the same idea, cf. RV 1:164:6 48. 8:58:2. 10:82:2.6), and only rarely is it viewed as something personal (cf. RV 1:164:10. 3:56:2).

42. Geldner, *ibid.*

success. 9:2 is a pretty long poem (25 verses), and is a prayer for blessings addressed to Kāma who is praised as the first-born, as the one superior to the gods, fathers and mortals, and as the one who is always great. Now there follows the pious man's offering of worship: "To you as such, O Kāma, do I pay homage" (v. 19).⁴³

Here belongs too 19:52,⁴⁴ a short poem which is a prayer uttered by a sacrificer who is desirous of wealth, power and force, and who therefore praises Kāma as the first principle: "Desire here came into being in the beginning, which was the first seed of mind" (v. 1); this utterance is practically identical with RV 10:29:4. The poet goes on to add that the god is 'set firm with power, mighty, shining, companion for him who seeks a companion' (v. 2); the present clause, which seems to be a citation from RV 10:91:1 ("Trusty friend to one who loves him"), celebrates on the one hand the god's great power and on the other his goodness but there is no reference here or in the verse that follow to his activity of arousing eros.

In the Bhagavad-Gītā we hear Kṛṣṇa saying, *bhuteṣu kāmō'smi* (7: 11), "In contingent beings I am desire", and this position of his, the speaker is careful to point out, is in no way opposed to dharma or righteousness. In 7: 8-11 the god in human form is disclosing himself as the ultimate reality underlying the phenomena of the world of experience: thus in water he is the flower, in the sun and moon light, and so forth and in the course of this revelatory discourse he identifies himself with desire (evidently not with eros).⁴⁵ We shall not

43. Being philosophical in nature, this hymn has often been translated; cf. M. Bloomfield, *Hymns of the Atharva-Veda* (The Sacred Books of the East 42, repr., Delhi, 1968) pp. 220-23 (text), 391-95 (commentary). W. D. Whitney, *Atharva-Veda-Samhitā* (2 vols., Harvard Oriental Series 7-8, repr., Delhi, 1971) II, pp. 521-25.

44. Whitney, *op. cit.*, pp. 985-87.

45. R. C. Zaehner, *The Bhagavad-Gītā* (Oxford, 1969) pp. 247f.

touch upon the Purāṇic tradition regarding love/desire, which is something quite late and does not contribute very much to a deeper understanding of the sexual life of the people of ancient India.

The *sūtras* and *śāstras* that deal with *dharma* and domestic life speak at length of marriage and other related matters, and in spite of their puritanical outlook, they never belittle, much less condemn, the enjoyment of physical love, for this specific activity was a sacred religious duty, contributing positively to man's well-being here on earth and in the other world. It is because of this conviction that treatises were composed, wherein marital life was described in detail,⁴⁶ and the earliest of these works is Vātsāyana's *Kāmasūtra* composed sometime in the first centuries of the Christian era. The book is addressed to the wealthy, sophisticated townflok of both sexes, and some idea of the thoroughness with which it describes love-making can be had from the fact that it distinguishes no less than sixteen varieties of kisses.⁴⁷

It has rightly been pointed out that the literature of Hindu India, no matter religious or secular, "is full of sexual allusions, sexual symbolism, and passages of frank eroticism".⁴⁸

46. Bechert-von Simson, *Einführung in die Indologie* § 125 (p. 169, with bibliography). M. Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature* (3 vols., Delhi, 1967) III/2, pp. 619-25.

47. A. L. Basham. *The Wonder that was India* (Evergreen ed., New York, 1959) p. 171.

48. Basham, *op. cit.* p. 170. We may also add here that Indian art is often frankly erotic, as is vouched for both by the frequent representation of *maithuna* and the depiction of feminine beauty in sculpture. The Greeks and the Romans regarded the matron as the ideal of feminine beauty, and people in the West look upon the same as being realized in the slender boyish type of female, but in ancient India the highest expression of beauty was the fecund woman: that is why we find females being represented with slender waists, thick thighs, broad hips and extraordinarily large and heavy breasts, and the postures the figures assume are such as would make

How true this is one can see if only one casts a cursive glance at the epics, especially at the MB which so often touches upon the subject of love.⁴⁹ We should bear in mind that the epics include a large corpus of ideas and ideals coming from the military castes which were indifferent or even hostile to the ascetic practices of the Jainas and the Buddhists, and would never endorse the doctrine of *fuga mundi* proclaimed aloud by the renouncers; they had, understandably enough, no great esteem for the priestly classes and their rituals, and it was they who more than anybody else, endeavoured to derive the maximum of pleasure from life.⁵⁰

conspicuous these parts of the body (something which is being done in modern Indian films as well). Sculptures of women with prominence given to their sex features are seen in some of the Buddhist caityas as well. The Poona scholar D. D. Kosambi in his *Ancient India. A History of its Culture and Civilization* (New-York, 1965) figure no. 87, reproduces a capital from one of the pillars in the caitya cave at Karle (Maharashtra) with figures of loving couples on it. He adds that it is "rather strange decoration for an assembly of celibate monks who had renounced the world to found a refuge in the wilderness".

49. Exhaustive survey of evidence in J. J. Meyer, *Sexual Life in Ancient India. A Study in the Comparative History of Indian Culture* (repr. Delhi, 1971). The main English title of this work is most misleading, for the German original was entitled *Das Weib im altindischen Epos*, 'Woman in Ancient Indian Epic' (Leipzig, 1913). Meyers' book has been of the utmost help in the writing of this study. Another bulky investigation by the same scholar which touches upon several facets of the present subject is *Trilogie altindischer Mächte und Feste der Vegetation* 3 vols., (Zurich, 1937). Another interesting monograph in German is Winternitz, *Die Frau im Brahmanismus* (Leipzig, 1926). The traditional orthodox position is synthesized in K. M. Munshi - N. C. Aiyer, *Women in Sacred Laws* (Bombay, 1953). For brief discussions, cf. Basham, *op cit*, pp. 170-72, 177-88. J. Auboyer, *Daily Life in Ancient India* (2nd impr., London, 1967) pp. 176-91. H. Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben. Die Cultur der vedischen Arier nach den Sāhita dargestellt* (repr., Hildesheim, 1973) pp. 305-36.

50. W. Ruben, "Vier Liebestragödien des Rāmāyaṇa," *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 100 (1950) pp. 287-355.

It should be conceded at the outset that the MB praises chastity and dwells on the unbounded power possessed by the chaste man: *brahmacaryam paro dharmah* (1: 170: 1) "Chastity is the highest virtue". It is even said to be identical with the Absolute, the Brahman, so that it is superior to all other virtues and leads to union with the Absolute. However, it is something hard, and he who wishes to remain chaste should never listen to the speech of women, nor should he look at them when they are naked, for the very sight of them can arouse the passion of weak man (12:214:7ff.). Kāma is the ally of death (12:258:35ff.), and what is still worse, *samsāraṇetu* (3:313:98), the cause of the chain of birth, death and rebirth. Pious considerations such as these occur here and there in the MB, but they are only one side of the coin, and what is of interest to the student of history is the other side.

The MB has its own psychology of love, according to which kāma arises *samkalpāt* (12:163:8), from *samkalpa*,⁵¹ i. e., idea, or rather fantasy, imagination, a point on which Manu too is in agreement: *samkalpanūlah kāmo...* (2: 3), "Samkalpa is the source whence springs kāma". From the workings of the fantasy is born *harṣa*- "joy, delight, rapture, glee", but in the present context, "sexual excitement, the joy, resulting from it". This experience can also arise from sound, taste and form (14: 24: 5), in other words, the mind, the ear, the mouth and the eyes can produce sexual delight. The odd thing here is that no reference is made to *sparsa*-, "touch, contact", which, as we shall subsequently see, had a part to play in love-making.⁵²

51. This classical term means "decision of the mind, persuasion, intention, purpose, wish, desire", etc; compare *samkalpajanman*-, "sprung from desire/ love, the god of love". The second element of the compound, *kalpa*- goes back to IE (s) *kel* (e) *p* -, "to cut, sever, separate", and its derivatives include Greek *skolops*, "stake, pale, thorn", Latin *scalpō*, "to scrape, scrap", and *sculpō*, "to carve, cut", Gothic *halbs*, Old High German *halb* (= English *half*), literally, "divided, cut". From the basic sense "to cut" the nuances here cited are most naturally derived.

52. The epics, by the way, give details about the ideal type of sex organs: the testicles must be hanging, the glans (i. e. the head of the penis) has to be soft, and so forth; for references, cf. Meyer, *Sexual Life*, p. 338.

There have been circles in ancient India that held the view that the love and the joys connected with it were the supreme good man could ever think of, and the MB records how on a certain occasion the Pāṇdavas were arguing about the highest element in *trivarga*: 'The course of the world rests upon *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*. Among these three, which is the foremost, which the second and which the last in point of importance?' (12: 167). While one of them declared that virtue was the highest, and another that wealth was supreme, Bhīma-sena argued that *kāma* was superior to the other two elements. According to him, had it not been for *kāma*, no man would ever have striven after virtue and wealth, and for its sake the sages gave themselves up to austerities, while others spent all their energy on the study of the Vedas, etc. In short, everything is steeped in *kāma* and no being of the past, present or future would ever become superior to one who is filled with *kāma* which is the innermost core of the world.⁵³ The practical conclusion, therefore, is,⁵⁴

Give thyself up to *kāma*. take thy joy with women,
In fair garb and ornament, and sweet to behold,
With young women loosed with the madness of drink:
For *kāma*, O king, for us is the greatest of all.

This point of view must have been held by many in India, though traditional circles had an altogether different conception: "*Dharma* . is foremost in point of merit. *Artha* is said to be the middling. *Kamā*, it is said by the wise, is the lowest of the three For this reason one should live with restrained soul, giving one's attention most to *dharma* " ⁵⁵

Kāma, the primordial godhead, is identical with Agni, the devouring god (13:85:11. 16f. 22). and the fire god has been given the name *Kāma* precisely because of his peerlessness (3: 219:23). Though he has no body, the god of love remains irresistible once he has come near a man (5: 39: 45f), and as

53. Ganguli, *MB VIII*, pp. 365ff.

54. Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. 332.

55. Ganguli, *MB VIII*, p. 366; cf. too the citation from the same chapter in n. 2 above.

sleep removes all shame, so does too passionate love (5: 35:50; 37: 8). There is the interesting story of the love Hidimbā, the sister of the man-eating giant Hidimbā, felt for Bhima who had come to the ogre's abode. The hero tells the monster who was angry with his sister for her infatuation with a human being: "It is not her own doing that this young woman lusts after me. She has been forced by the Bodiless God who ranges inside the body" (1:153:25ff.).⁵⁶

Love is a universal experience, one to which even the gods are subject, and as all know, the sacred books of India abound in stories about their sex exploits⁵⁷ Indra, who has his own wife, and also innumerable celestial hetaerae in his harem, comes in the form of the husband of the woman he feels attracted to, and defiled Ahalyā, wife of a sage, while the holy man was still alive (5: 12: 373). To cite another story, Varuṇa, the god of the waters,⁵⁸ becomes enamoured of Bhadrā, Soma's daughter who was destined to be the wife of Uttathya, and he therefore abducts her; he refuses when he is asked to give her up (13:154). The ṛṣis who were so famous for their penances, were also good connoisseurs of women, and several stories are told in the MB and the Purāṇas of their seducing women, or of their being seduced by the fair sex:⁵⁹ the highest form of penance and sanctity is not proof against the attractions of sex.

Sanskrit literature delights in giving descriptions of female beauty. The following passage where the heroine is the

56. J. A. B. van Buitinen, *The Mahābhārata* (3 vols., Chicago, 1971 ff.) I, p. 297.

57. Polytheistic religions have as a rule this kind of narratives; on the custom of making fun of the gods, cf. the present writer's study mentioned in n. 59 below.

58. In the Vedic age he was the most ethical of the gods; for details cf. H. Lüders, *Varuna. I. Varuṇa und die Wasser. II. Varuṇa und das Rta* (Göttingen, 1951-59).

59. These sex stories are studied by the author in his paper "The Rishis" (to appear in *Indian Theological Studies*), where full references are given, and the question of the gods' behaviour is also discussed.

60. Ganguli, *MB* II, pp. 101 f.

celestial nymph Urvaśī is interesting, for it shows that women in love were in the habit of making themselves tipsy and then of going at night to the house of the man they felt attracted to: "And when the twilight had deepened and the moon was up, that Apsara of high hips set out . . . And as she proceeded, her deep finely tapering breasts, decked with a chain of gold and adorned with celestial unguents and smeared with fragrant sandal paste, began to tremble. And in consequence of the weight of her breasts, she was forced slightly to stoop forward at every step, bending her waste exceedingly beautiful with three folds. And her loins of faultless shape, the elegant abode of the god of love, furnished with fair and high and round hips, and wide at their lower part as a hill, and being decked with thin attire, appeared highly graceful. . . . And exhilarated with a little liquor which she had taken and excited by desire, and moving in diverse attitudes and expressing a sense of delight, she looked more beautiful than ever."⁶⁰ Here we have a realistic account of the behaviour of women in love, and according to law the one who has sex with a woman who has come to him because of love does not commit adultery.⁶¹

Mention has been made of Urvaśī's taking a drink of liquor, and it may come to many as a surprise that women, in order to get rid of their shyness in making love, were in the habit of making themselves tipsy: they would then be able to put their arms freely round their lovers (11:20:7). In the MB recension of the story of Rāma we hear Sītā telling Rāvaṇa who was making advances to her: "How could a woman who has drunk madhvika and madhumādhavi feel any longing for sour rice-gruel?" (3: 278: 39f.).⁶²

61. Nārada, one of the minor codes, remarks: "Nor is (legitimate) offspring produced, when a man meets a woman at another house than his own. That is declared adultery by those conversant with (the law) on this subject, unless she have come into (the man's) house of her own accord" (12:60); cf. J. Jolly, *The Minor Law-Books* (The Sacred Books of the East 33, repr., Delhi, 1977) p. 177 (cf. too note on the verse).

62. The two technical terms cited in the text are formations from the well-known word *madhu* (from IE *medhu*-), "sweet, pleasant" (adjective), "sweet food/ drink, milk, honey,

The close connection between intoxication and love-making is highlighted by a custom described by the Gobhila Grhyasūtra in the section dealing with marriage: "After she (=the bride) has been washed with klitaka,⁶³ barley and beans, a friend should besprinkle her three times at her head, so that her whole body becomes wet, with surā of first quality,⁶⁴ with (the formula), 'Kāma, I know your name. Intoxication you are by name' (2: 1: 10).⁶⁵ Let it be recalled here that, in opposition to the Brahman tradition that condemned drinking,⁶⁶ the Tantra school praises surā as the annihilator of sins, the mother of pleasure and release, augments of understanding, and so on.⁶⁷ No wonder, then, that the bride is anointed with, or rather bathed in it.

wine, mead" (noun), which corresponds to Greek *methu*, 'wine, mead', Old High German *metu*, "mead", Lithuanian *medus*, Old Slavonic *medj*, "honey", etc. Discussions in Mayrhofer, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen* II, pp. 570-72.

63. This is some kind of plant whose name remains obscure (Mayrhofer, *op. cit.* I p. 282).

64. That is, surā prepared from molasses. The drink in question here was popular among the Aryans (Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben*, pp. 280 f.), and it is to be distinguished from soma (= Avestan *haoma*), the sacred, liturgical drink which came even to be deified. Etymologically speaking, *surā-* (= Avestan *hurā-*) is formed from the IE base *seu-*, "sap, juice, to press out sap", with the help of the formative *-l-* (which becomes in Indo-Iranian *-r-*); compare the cognates Greek *hulē*, "mud, slime", Lithuanian and Latvian *sulā*, "sap, juice", etc. Full list of correspondences in J. Pokorny, *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* I, p. 913.

65. F. Max Müller- H. Oldenberg, *Grhya-Sūtras* (2 vols., The Sacred Books of the East 29-30, repr., Delhi, 1967) II, p. 43.

66. Women's drunkenness is condemned by orthodox lawgivers as a most serious sin: the woman who is addicted to drinks is as sinful as the one who has murdered her husband, or has procured abortion, and so on. The Brahman woman who drinks spirits will, instead of joining her husband in heaven, be reborn as a member of the lowest castes (Vasistha 21: 11).

67. Meyer, *Sexual Life*, p. 327, n. 1 (pp. 327 f.).

It was doubtless when women were tipsy that men were wont to take liberties with them, for according to the ideas of the epic age the warrior's pride and glory consisted in pressing the breasts of loving women in making gifts, and in slaying foes (8:83:23). Of the hero Bhūriśvara it is said that his hand took away women's girdles, pressed their swelling breasts, felt their navel, thigh and private parts, and undid their garments (11:24: 8ff). Duḥśāsana, whose body above the navel was of diamond and below of flowers so as to fascinate women (3:252: 5ff.), boasts that his hand used to press swelling breasts (8: 83 : 22).

The custom of free love in the secluded areas is no less clearly attested, and princesses were in the habit of going for picnics to forests where they drank intoxicants (madhumādhavī) and lolled about. There is an interesting description of the outing of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna to the river Yamuna when the days were very hot (1:222). On reaching their destination, "flavourful and costly foods and delicacies and liquors were laid out as well as all manner of garlands", and the picnickers began naturally to play "Some of the women played in the woods, others in the water, still others in the cabins... At the height of intoxication Draupadī and Subhadrā distributed priceless clothes and ornaments to the women. Some danced rapturously, others shouted, some of the women laughed, and others drank the choice liquor..."⁶⁸

Festivals too were occasions when men and women got drunk and made love: at the time of the celebration in honour of the mountain Raivataka the din made by drunken and singing women and men pierced the sky, and the poor who had come for the function were given not only delicious food but also maireya⁶⁹ and surā, "spiced liquor" and "spirits";

68. Van Buitinen, *The Mahābhārata* I, p. 414.

69. This is an intoxicating drink of the epic age, whose name is the popular form of *madirā*, "intoxicating", an adjective occurring in the RV (Grassmann, *Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda*, col. 983) and derived from the root *mad*, "to boil, bubble, get drunk", etc. which too is Vedic (Grassmann, *op. cit.*, cols. 977-81), and is related to Greek *madaō*, "to flow", Latin *madō*, "to be wet, be drunk"; correspondences in Pokorny, *op. cit.*, pp. 964f.

the aftermath of this all is anybody's guess (14:59:5ff.). Another occasion when women got drunk was when they were entertaining Brahmans (1:147) One night Kuntī held a great feast for Brahmans, for which women came in crowds: "The women ate and drank and made merry as they pleased", and a woman who had come with her five sons "drank wine until they were drunk and besotted: they lost consciousness."⁷⁰ On these occasions the guests satisfied themselves as well as their female hosts, and it is no doubt this activity of theirs that gave rise to the following proverb preserved by the Apastamba Dharmaśāstra: "The he goat and the Veda-learned Brahman show the strongest sexual tendencies" (2:6:14:11). Lastly sacrifices too were marked by women's drunkenness: when Yudhiṣṭhira performed the horse-sacrifice, there was provided a sea of spirits and spiced liquor and the celebration was most pleasant, "with all the drunken, noisy, happy folk, and the crowd of right merry young women" (14:89).⁷¹

From our brief survey of the traditions of ancient India it is clear that "her people enjoyed life, passionately delighting in both the things of the senses and the things of the spirit".⁷² It is not at all right to envisage ancient India as the land of life-negating ascetics, or as the only place in the whole world where men and women were exclusively pre-occupied with the spiritual life. The former is a fallacy created by persons from the West who concentrated all their attention on one particular group of religious texts, and the latter by writers in India who were suffering from inferiority complex vis-à-vis the political, economic and technological superiority of the West, and who tried to cover it up with a fine camouflage!⁷³

70. Van Buitinen, *op. cit.*, pp. 290f.

71. Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. 325.

72. Basham, *The Wonder that was India*, p. 9.

73. This has been pointed out by both western and Indian writers: e. g. Ursula King, "Hindu Social Reformers on Indian Spirituality", *Social Action* 28 (1978) pp. 62-86. C. P. M. Namboodiry, "Is India all Religion and Spirituality?" *The Illustrated Weekly* 99 (February 12, 1978) pp. 6-15. This Brahman scholar observes: 'With the typical inferiority of a colonial, the Indian philosopher was bent on proving the superiority of India over

Acquisition of wealth was one of the duties of the Aryan householder, and in ancient India there were wealth-seeking businessmen, prosperous craftsmen, rich warriors, and of course Brahmans who enjoyed perfect economic security through their position as the priestly class. There were also workers' co-operatives which have been compared to the *artel* of pre-revolutionary Russia.⁷⁴ and lawbooks lay down norms to govern their functioning. The *Arthashastra* deals with so many measures which are the basis of the planned economies of modern times, and according to one specialist, "it is striking that ancient Indian political theorists anticipated by over 2000 years the plans put forward by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations for maintaining a stable level of prices of staple commodities on a world wide scale".⁷⁵

Sex life in ancient India was most vigorous, so much so that ritual intercourse became an integral part of the worship of some sects which were wont to regard it as the surest means to salvation. To the credit of Hindu India it must be said that some of the worst forms of sex perversion that were rampant in some of the countries of old (and are now rampant in the West) were practically unknown among the Hindus. The Hindu was able to have a holistic approach to sex, so that there was no dichotomy between its enjoyment and the quest after union with the Absolute, and it is in the light of this that we have to understand the details given in the second part of our study.

Europe. And as he could not assert this superiority in the fields of social and political institutions, science and technology, military and economic power, he strove to show it in the only field in which it could be done: that of religion and spirituality" (p. 7).

74. The Russian word here cited (which should, strictly speaking, be written *artelj*) means "association for common work"; cf. the phrase *artelj sel'skokhozyaistvennaya*, "agricultural artel, collective farm, kolkhos". On the word, cf. M. Vasmer, *Russisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* (3 vols.; Indogermanische Bibliothek. II. Reihe: Wörterbücher, Heidelberg, 1976-80) I, p. 26.

75. Basham, *op. cit.*, p. 217.

How true our remarks are may be gathered from the following words of a Vaiṣṇava sannyāsin from Bengal: "By repeatedly indulging in sexual union with their spiritual consorts in the above manner,⁷⁶ the *sādhus* attain their spiritual salvation... That is why the *sādhus* regard *vīrya*⁷⁷ as *Brahma Bhagavan*. *Bhag* means *yonī*,⁷⁸ or vagina, and *van* means *linga*, or penis; that is why the word '*Bhagavan*' (or Supreme Being) actually means wholeheartedly enjoying *bhag*, or vagina, with the *van*, or penis."⁷⁹ We must confess that this represents an aberration on the part of ignorant men, and no enlightened Hindu sannyāsin will ever endorse this view.⁸⁰

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76. What the speaker means here is the reabsorption, by the penis, of the semen it has discharged into the vagina during intercourse: he feels that it should not be wasted!

77. Literally, "what pertains to *vīra*-, the male"; in actual use it has the meanings "manliness, courage, strength, heroic deed, semen virile" (this latter being the sense intended by the speaker).

78. As a matter of fact, in Sanskrit *bhaga*- stands also for the female organ, *yonī*, vulva, but this is only a secondary, derivative nuance of the common word *bhaga*-, "prosperity, happiness, possession, fortune", and also "love, beauty, lust", on the semantic evolution involved here, cf. Mayrhofer: *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen* II, p. 459.

79. S. Sinha, 'Vaiṣṇava Influence on a Tribal Culture', *Krishna: Myths, Rites, and Attitudes* (Phoenix Books, Chicago, 1968) pp. 64-89 (cf. p. 80). Since the sannyāsin who is the author of this statement is a Bengalee, he uses Bengalee forms of Sanskrit words; in our citation, for the sake of clarity, we have adopted the proper Sanskrit orthography.

80. Let us never forget the fact, a fact of which India can genuinely be proud that the Buddha, Mahavīra, Sankara, Rāmānuja, and a legion of other saintly men were celibates.

Dharma, the Great Goal of Life

Exponents of traditional Hindu moral theology (*dharmasāstra*) hold that a person can have three goals or aims in this life, namely satisfaction of sexual cravings, enjoyment of wealth and practice of virtue. These three life-goals, technically called '*puruṣārthas*', are eros (*kāma*), wealth (*artha*) and morality or righteousness (*dharma*).¹ These three life-goals are cumulatively called in Sanskrit '*trivarga*' or the triad. In the enumeration of these *puruṣārthas*, Hindu tradition consistently gives the pride of place to *dharma*, by mentioning it first; after *dharma* comes *artha*, and then only *kāma*: *dharmārthakāma*. This order of enumeration suggests first, the pre-eminence of *dharma* over *artha* and *kāma*; secondly it suggests that the enjoyment of wealth and pleasure is to be in conformity with the rules of *dharma* or sound morality.

There is a gradation of value among the three *puruṣārthas*: *kāma* is the lowest; only the dull-minded seek after *kāma* alone says the *Mahābhārata*.² 'A wise man tries to secure all the three; but if he has a choice between *dharma* on the one hand, and *kāma* on the other, he should choose *dharma*. *Dharma* is the source of both *artha* and *kāma*'.³ The *dharmasāstra*-writers, without condemning *kāma*, assign to *kāma* the lowest place; they admonish that the satisfaction of the animal impulses in man has only a lower value than the moral-spiritual value (*dharma*); hence *kāma*-*artha* should be subservient to *dharma*.⁴ Yājñavalkya says that the enjoyment of pleasures should not be opposed to *dharma*.⁵

1. *Puruṣeṇa arthyate iti puruṣārthah*.

2. *bālāḥ kāmam eva anurudhyate/ Mahābhārata Sānti-parva*, 167. 8-9.

3. *Ibidem*

4. *Gautama-dharma-sāstra*, 9. 46-47.

5. *Yājñavalkya-smṛti*, 1. 115.

Mokṣa, the Parama-puruṣārtha

Hindu theologians at a later date added a fourth *puruṣārtha*, namely, *mokṣa*; *mokṣa* means perfect liberation or eternal happiness. *Mokṣa* is declared to be the '*Parama-puruṣārtha*' or the Supreme goal of human existence. And *dharma* or moral life is proposed to be the means to *mokṣa*; *dharma* is the means to *mokṣa* because *dharma* directs the people along the right path by regulating their enjoyment of *artha* and *kāma*. A person desirous of eternal salvation was later admonished to renounce all the first three *puruṣārthas* (*dharma-artha-kāma*), and to strive for perfect and eternal liberation. Subsequently this renunciation of the first three *puruṣārthas* (*trivargas*) and the striving for *mokṣa* came to be recognized as the fourth *puruṣārtha*.

The earlier conception of the *puruṣārthas* was parallel to the Sāṃkhya conception of the three *guṇas*, viz *sattva-rajas-tamas*. Man's body was regarded by the Sāṃkhyans as a composite of the three *guṇas*, *sattva-rajas-tamas* (goodness and intelligence; action and passion; dullness and darkness) in various proportions. Those in whom the *tamo-guṇa* (the *guṇa* of dullness and darkness) predominates, lose the discrimination between good and evil, right and wrong; they are dull, stubborn, and their actions are malicious. Those in whom the *guṇa* of *rajas* (passion) predominates, are passionate, self centred and feverishly active. But those in whom the *guṇa* of *sattva* (goodness) is preponderant, discern right from wrong; their activity is without selfishness and greed. This threefold division of the Sāṃkhya personality was applied also to the triad of *puruṣārthas*: the *sāttvikas* (people of *sattva-guṇa*) were believed to be naturally inclined to *dharma* while the *rājasas* were credited with *kāma* or passion and lust; and *artha*-craving was ascribed to the *tāmasikas*.

Most of the ancient authorities consider the *puruṣārthas* as mutually exclusive. That is to say, in the society some people (*kāma-kāmins*) go for *kāmas* or sexual satisfaction while others (*arthins*) amass wealth, and others (*dharmins*) strive for *dharma* or *punya* (merit) to be enjoyed in a terminable heaven (*svarga*); and still others (*mumukṣus*) renouncing all the three, apply themselves for *mokṣa*. But the modern trend is to group

the first three (*trivargas*) *puruṣārthas* under the supremacy of *mokṣa*.

The triad in the Rgveda. The *Rgveda* employs three important terms to indicate three allied concepts. They are *ṛta* (cosmic order, right), *vrata* (ordinances deemed to be of godly origin, vow) and *dharma* (fixed principles, religious rites). Gradually *ṛta* was relegated to the background, and '*satyam*' (truth, rectitude, right, righteousness) took its place; and *vrata* was narrowed down to sacred vows one has made to a god; and *dharma* eventually became an all embracing concept⁶. In the Br. U. . 4. 14 '*satya*' is equated with *dharma*. Remember also in this connection the celebrated prayer of the Bṛhadāra-nyaka-upaniṣad (1. 3. 28): "To Satyam lead me from asatyam..."

The Root and Ramifications of Dharma

Before we launch into a full discussion on *dharma* as a *puruṣārtha* it is fitting to elucidate a bit more the various usages of *dharma*. Etymologically the word '*dharma*' is derived from the Sanskrit verbal root '*dhṛ dharati*' = to bear, hold, uphold, maintain. (It has etymological connection with the Indo-European words such as *bhṛ*, bear, *phere*, *ferre* etc.) The noun form '*dharma*' means that which upholds, maintains the universe in due order. Expressions such as *dharma putra*, *saha-dharminī*, *dharmaṣṭha*, *dharma-pada*, *dharma-śāstra* are of common usage in modern Indian languages. In current usage the technical term *dharma* stands for ethics, religion, morality, spirituality, truth, virtue, good conduct and so on⁷; it also stands for natural and positive laws, the moral code, the various distinct duties of the individual. The whole religio-philosophical and didactic literature of India lays great stress on the necessity of maintaining *dharma* for spiritual realization or God-experience. All the various systems of Indian thought emphasise the observance of *dharma* as a *conditio sine qua non* of internal purification leading to eternal bliss or '*nirāśreyaśa*'.

6. Thus the parting advice of the guru to his students was: *satyam vada, dharmam cara*.... Tait. up. 1. 11.

7. *dhriyate anena iti dharmah*.

Dharma admits of various divisions

One very common division of *dharma* is *śrauta* (related to śruti, hence Vedic) and *smārta* (related to smṛti literature, hence traditional). *Śrauta-dharma* comprises rules and regulations concerning rites and sacrifices enjoined by the *Samhita-Brāhmaṇa* portions of the Vedas. The *Smārta-dharma* on the other hand comprises those religio-moral actions of various castes and stations of life (*varṇa* and *āśrama*), usually dealt with very extensively in *smṛti* literature as in *Dharma śāstra* treatises and *Rāmāyaṇa-Mahābhāratas*. Some authorities speak of a three fold *dharma*, viz. *śrauta*, *smārta* and *śiṣṭācāra*. *Śiṣṭācāra* means exemplary actions of those people respected in society. A more common division of *dharma* is that into '*sādhāraṇa-dharma* (*sāmānya-dharma*) and *viśeṣa-dharma*'. *Viśeṣa-dharmas* are those duties specific to particular caste and life station (*āśrama*) while *sāmānya-dharma* or *sādhāraṇa-dharma* includes all duties common to any person irrespective of caste or life-station. Again, there is still another division of *dharma* from the point of active life or retirement from active life: *pravṛtti-dharma* and *nivṛtti-dharma*: *pravṛtti-dharma* is the code of conduct for those engaged in vigorous active life; and *nivṛtti-dharma* means total abstention from all kinds of activities and absolute union with the Supreme Being⁸.

The Classical Definition of Dharma-purusartha

The classical definitions of *dharma* given by the philosophical schools of *Pūrva mīmāṃsā* and *Vaiśeṣika* deserve our special attention. Jaimini, the reputed founder of the *Pūrva-mīmāṃsā-darśana* defines *dharma* right at the opening of his system as follows: *codanā-lakṣaṇo'rtho dharmah*. This means "Dharma is conduct in conformity with a Vedic injunction"⁹. Hence whatever is prescribed by or laid down in (*hita*, *vihi*ta, *vidhi*) the Veda is *dharma*; and whatever is prohibited by the

8. There are three well-known books by Western scholars on Hindu dharma or ethics. 'Development of Indian Thought' by A. Schweitzer. 'Religious Quest of India' by John McKenzie. 'Ethics of India' by Hopkins. The last one has very sympathetic approach to the subject.

9. *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā-sūtra*, 1. 2.

Veda is *adharma* or sinful. (The word 'codanā' occurring in the above Sanskrit definition literally means 'urging or prompting or exciting or exhortation'; technically it means a 'Vedic statement that urges people to do a morally good act'.) Sabara, the commentator of Jaimini paraphrases his master's words saying, 'by *dharma* is here meant a virtuous or salutary act'¹⁰. The commentators point out that the above definition of Jaimini (*codanā lakṣaṇo'rtho dharmah*) implies the idea that the Veda or Śruti (Revelation) is the source of the knowledge of *dharmic* act or right conduct. Hence the dictum '*Vedo'khilam dharma-mulam*' - Veda in its entirety is the root or source of *dharma*' (Manu, 2. 6). This dictum also implies that the object of a Vedic injunction is *dharmic* or moral (*codanam kriyāyāḥ pravartakam vacanam*). Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, the *Mīmāṃsaka* exponent holds the view that the Veda gives information on *dharma* and *adharma*, while the *Mīmāṃsaka* expositions and treatises give more detailed information on the same. Jaimini however considers the Veda as the authority on moral matters¹¹.

Kaṇāda, the illustrious founder of the *Vaiśeṣika* system of philosophy defines *dharma* as 'that which causes well-being and perfect happiness': that is to say, *dharma* brings well-being here on earth and perfect happiness or eternal bliss in the next world¹².

Why practise Dharma?

'There is no elaborate discussion as to why a person should practise *dharma*' in the history of *dharma-sāstra*. "But

10. Ya eva śreyaskara sa dharma-śabdena ucyate. Sabara's comment.

11. *dharma jijnāsamānānām pramāṇam paramam śrutiḥ. Vedāḥ smṛtiḥ sadācārah svasya ca priyamātmanah etat caturvidham prāhuh sāksād dharmasya lakṣaṇam.*

Manu 2. 12.

12. *dharmo viśvasya jagataḥ pratiṣṭhā. Tai. Ar. 10. 63. dhāraṇāt dharma. Mahābh. udyogap. 89. 67.*

*dharmo eva hato hanti
dharmo rakṣati rakṣitah/
tasmād dharmo na hantavyo
mā no dharmo hato f vadhīt/*

Manu, 8. 15.

it should not be supposed that no indications whatever are given of the reasons why this should be done". Two principles emerge: "In the midst of countless rules of outward conduct there is always insistence on the necessity to satisfy the *inner man* (*antara-puruṣa*) or conscience"¹³. Manu (4. 161) says "assiduously do that which will give satisfaction to the 'antarātman' or inner self." Manu says further (4. 239); "Not parents, nor wife nor sons will be a man's friends in the next world but only righteousness". "Dharmas tam anugachati"— *dharma* alone accompanies the departing man—says Manu elsewhere. And the Vanaparva of Mahabhārata and Manu 8. 85-92 say 'Gods and the inner man mark the sinful acts'. Another reason given for the cultivation of such virtues such as *dayā*, *ahimsā* etc. is the philosophical principle of the One Self being immanent in every individual as declared in the Mahāvākya "Tat tvam asi", "This is the highest point reached in Indian metaphysics, and combines morality and metaphysics"¹⁴. This "tat tvam asi" doctrine implies that the good or evil of one's action will affect others too.

The over-enthusiastic eulogy of Paul Deussen (b. 1845 near Koblenz, W. Germany) on Vedāntic Dharma based on "tat tvam asi" is worth quoting here: "People have often reproached the Vedānta with being defective in morals, and indeed the Indian genius is too contemplative to speak much of deeds; but the fact is nevertheless, that the highest and purest morality is the immediate consequence of the Vedānta. The Gospels quote correctly as the highest law of morality: "Love your neighbour as yourselves". But why should I do so since by the order of nature I feel pain and pleasure only in myself, not in my neighbour? The answer is not in the Bible (this venerable book not quite free of Semitic realism), but it is in the Veda, is in the great formula "tat tvam asi", which gives

13. Cfr. Kane, P. V. 'History of Dharma 'sāstra', Bhandarkar Research Institute, Poona, 1962, vide vols V and II & III. cfr. p. 7 of vol. II. See also the excellent articles on Dharma in 'Bible bhashyam, (Dec. 1980) Ap. Seminary, Kottayam, Kerala.

14. Kane, op. cit. II pp. 8 ff.

in three words metaphysics and morals altogether. You shall love your neighbour as yourselves, —because you are your neighbour, and mere illusion makes you believe that your neighbour is something different from yourselves. Or in the words of the Bhagavadgītā: He who knows himself in everything and everything in himself, will not injure himself by himself: *na hinasti ātmanā ātmānam*. This is the sum and tenor of all morality, and this is the standpoint of a man knowing himself as Brahman”¹⁵. Dakṣa (3. 22) declares: “He who desires happiness should look upon another just as he looks upon himself. Happiness and misery affect oneself and other people in the same way”¹⁶. So according to Deussen and Kane and many others, the ultimate reason why dharma is to be practised is the great philosophic-moral principle “*tat tvam asi*” or “*aham brahma asmi*”: all are one, nothing but the One, Brahman. Besides, the approval of one’s conscience (inner man) and the attainment of mokṣa also are pointed out as the rationale for the observance of dharma. As Eliot Deutsch points out, “The quality then that ought to inform human action is non-egoism which, positively expressed, is what the Advaitin understands to be “love”. One must interrelate with “others”, one must conduct oneself with the knowledge that the other is non-different from oneself”¹⁷.

Dharma concept as a Philosophy of Value

The concept of dharma, especially as it is expressed in the Upaniṣads and Vedānta, is an expression of a philosophy of value. Mokṣa or perfect liberation from this mundane existence is prized as the Highest Value or Summum Bonum (*nih-śreyasa*) of human existence. Hence dharma is viewed in relation to mokṣa, the Supreme Value. As Eliot Deutsch observes, “The entire Advaita system is permeated with value questions, in such a way that an independent, separate treatment of them

15. Paul Deussen’s Address in 1893 to the Bombay Branch of the ‘Royal Asiatic Society’.

16. *Yathaivātmā paras tadvad draṣṭavyah sukhamicchata*/Dakṣa, 3. 22.

17. See my recent book: ‘Religion and Ethics in Advaita’. Indian edition, 1982, Ap. Seminary, Kottayam, Kerala, Chapter on Rta and Dharma.

is unnecessary". *Anubhava* or the direct and personal experience of Brahman is held as the final goal of all dharma, of all human activities. Here we find the ultimate criterion of dharma or religio ethico moral activities: Any action that is conducive to Brahman experience is judged to be good; any action that proves to be an impediment to Brahman-experience is judged to be evil or bad. Thus the value of any human act is judged in its relationship to the Supreme Value, namely, Brahman-experience or perfect liberation: the value of an action is rated in the currency of spiritual experience. In fact, the value of all things is judged in their relation to the Supreme Good, namely, the Atman or Paramātmā (Brahman). This value-concept is clearly expressed in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka upa- niṣad where it says: "Everything is dear or valuable in its relation to the Supreme Atman" - ātmanas tu kāmāya sarvam priyam bhavati¹⁸.

How to know one's dharma?

This question is briefly answered in the following way: Sruti (Vedas), smṛti (tradition) and śiṣṭācāra (exemplary deeds of good men) tell you what dharma is and what adharmā is. In case of a conflict between Veda and Tradition in the matter of dharma, Vedic authority has pre-eminence. If the clash is between smṛti and śiṣṭācāra, smṛti has pre-eminence. In case of a clash between two śiṣṭācāras, there is an option: you follow your inner voice or conscience.

Sādhāraṇa-dharma or Dharma for all

As we said earlier, Dharma-śāstra writers divide dharma as sādhāraṇa-dharma and viśeṣa-dharma. The Hindu Sāmānya-dharma (sādhāraṇa-dharma) amounts more or less to the Decalogue of the Bible. The Yama-Niyama of the Yoga-sūtra is usually called the 'Ten Commandments' of Hinduism. Yama enshrines the 'pañcaśīlas' viz ahimsā (non-injury), satyam (truth), asteyam (non-stealing), brahma-caryam (chastity) and aparigraham (non-robbery or non-possession). And the Niyama consists of śauca (purity), santōṣa (contentment), tapas (austerity), svādhyāya (religious study) and īśvara-praṇidhāna (worship of God).

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Moksa as the Ultimate Goal

O. Apprehension of Death

Psychologists say that "of all things that move man, one of the principal ones is his terror of death",¹ and that human activity is "designed largely to avoid the fatality of death, to overcome it by denying in some way that it is the final destiny of man".² It is no exaggeration to say that man's awareness of the problem of death is traceable back even to the immediate ancestors of human race. There is evidence that the Neanderthal man³ and the Cro-Magnon man⁴ really grappled with the problem of death. As human beings began to live together laying the first stones of civilisation and created the first myths of religion, the awareness of death was present as a basic motive.^{4b}

1. E. Becker, *The Denial of Death* (New York: Free Press, 1973) p. 11.

2. *Ibid*, p. ix.

3. Cf. Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man* (London: St. James Place, 1965), p. 198.

4. Cf. T. Mainage, *Les Religions de la Préhistoire: L' Age Paléolithique* (Paris: Desclèe, 1921) p. 38.

4b. There is some truth in the observation that culture is built upon repressions and some psychologists of our day consider consciousness of death as the primary object of repression, because the human being is primarily also an avoider of death (cf. E. Becker, *op. cit.*, p. 96). According to the philosophical reflection of Panikkar, however, "if the will to live is a realistic will to live a real life and not a whimsical desire for an imaginary life, we must recognise that inasmuch as real life is lived under the existential condition of death, death itself has to be taken into account and equally willed" (R. Panikkar, *The Vedic Experience*. California: University of California Press, 1977, p. 533). It would then follow that man's will to live to a large extent has not been realistic down through the centuries.

O. 1. By the time of the Egyptian Pyramid Texts⁵ we find already a well thought out theology of life after death with such ideas as the *post-mortem* judgment and the resurrection of the dead and a well developed liturgy to attain life everlasting.⁶ The same concern with death and what comes thereafter was also present in ancient Mesopotamia, though the outlook was different. Archaeological evidence bears witness to the way they overcame the blind alley of death through the belief in a life beyond the grave which was not thought to be very different from the present life.⁷ The Mesopotamian *Epic of Gilgamesh* dramatises the tragic case of the human being confronted with the inevitability of death.⁸ The *Epic of Enuma Elish* further theoretizes how death became the lot of the human being.⁹ A similar story is told with new perspectives by the book of *Genesis* where the universal fact of death is explained through the myth of the fall of man.

In the Greek culture too the problem of death loomed large¹⁰ and as a whole for the Western religions the preoccu-

5. Pyramid Texts are inscriptions on the interior walls of the pyramids of certain of the pharaohs of the 5th and 6th dynasties (c. 2425-2300 B.C.). These texts constitute "the oldest corpus of Egyptian religious and funerary literature now extant" (R. O. Faulkner, transl., *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964, preface).

6. Cf. Pyramid texts 193, 1068, 2092-93; transl. Faulkner, *op. cit.*, p. 48, 177, 298; J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1906), vol. I p. 115; H. Bonnet, *Reallexikon der ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte* (Berlin: de Gruyter & Co., 1952) p. 621b.

7. Cf. A. Parrot, *Archéologie Mésopotamienne*, vols 2 (Paris: Editions Albin Michel, 1946) I, pp. 276, 296-97, 318.

8. Cf. G. Contenau, *L'Épopée de Gilgamesh* (Paris: L'Artisan du Livre, 1939) pp. 17ff.

9. A. Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis* (Chicago: The Univ. of Chicago Press, 1951, 2nd ed) pp. 18ff.

10. Cf. J. Wiesner, *Grab und Jenseits: Untersuchungen im Agäischen Raum zur Bronzezeit und frühen Eisenzeit* (Berlin: A. Töpelmann, 1938), pp. 196-200; cf. also E. Rees, *The Odyssey of Homer* (New York: The Modern Library, 1960) p. 68.

pation with death furnished the basic motive both in theology and in worship and rituals.

O. 2. In ancient India too man was concerned with death and the problems it created, and the Vedic man shared the beliefs elsewhere in the personal kind of immortality in another world. The prayer to *Soma Pavamāna*¹¹ reflects the hope for a blessed life in heaven:

Where light unfailing ever shines,
where dwells the Sun, in that deathless world
place me O Purifier, beyond harm's reach

(Rg Veda IX, 113, 7)¹²

And this blessed life was thought to be the fulfilment of our needs and desires:

In the place of vows and eager longings (kāmanikāma)
the realm of golden Sun, of libations
and fulness of joy, there make me immortal.
Where happiness and joy abound,
pleasures and delights, where all desires
find their fulfilment, make me immortal.

(Rg Veda IX, 113, 10-11)¹³

Here the problem of death is tackled in a similar way as in Egypt, Mesopotamia and Greece and later with more refined categories in Bible and Christian Theology.

O. 3. However, unlike in the religio-cultural traditions of the West, there erupts a new consciousness in Vedic India, a disposition contrary to the general outlook to life, which tackles the problem of life and death really in a new way through the doctrine of *mokṣa*¹⁴. *Mokṣa* overcomes death by

11. *Soma* is "the sacrificial plant from which the *Soma*-juice is extracted with elaborated rituals, hence the sap or drink of immortality..." *Pavamāna* is the "epithet of *Soma*: 'flowing clear, being purified and purifying', thus holy and sanctifying" (R. Panikkar, *The Vedic Experience*, p. 892, 886).

12. Translation, R. Panikkar, *The Vedic Experience*, p. 634.

13. *Ibid.*

14. *Mokṣa* means liberation, absolute freedom, release from *samsāra*, the cycle of birth and death.

relegating it to the realm of *avidyā* (ignorance), thus refusing to accept it as part and parcel of how man's case ultimately is. This article deals with *mokṣa* in its immediate context of the four *puruṣārthas* and in its relationship with the Upaniṣadic awareness of the ultimate nature of reality.

1. From Vedas to Upanisads

The doctrine of *mokṣa* can be taken as a personal and practical application of the gradual transformation of the Indian mind from the Vedas to the Upaniṣads.¹⁵ In the early Vedic period man lived an extroverted life in a world of plurality and astounding beauty as well as of frightening powers. In this world of rich multiplicity, there were also a number of Gods to whom hymns were sung and sacrifices were offered. The ideal aimed at, especially in the Ṛgveda and in the Brahmaṇas, was length of days on earth and life in the world of heaven in companionship with the Gods. But at the culmination of the Vedic wisdom as expressed in the Upaniṣads, there takes place a great transformation in man's perception of reality: a more reflective tendency sets in and the search for the depths of reality takes the course of an inward journey. Here "hymns to gods and goddesses are replaced by a search for the reality underlying the flux of things."¹⁷ The penetrating question was: "What is that which being known, everything else becomes known?" (Muṇḍ Up. I, i, 3). Man's inward journey reaches an ultimate limit from all sides perceiving there an all-encompassing reality, Brahman.¹⁸ The Vedic Gods were gradually

15. Cf. P. Deussen, *The Philosophy of the Upanishads* (transl. A. S. Geden) New York: Dover Publications 1966) p. 339.

16. Cf. A. B. Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads* (The Harvard Oriental Series vol. 32, first ed 1925, Indian reprint by Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi, 1976) p. 581; cf. also P. Deussen, *op. cit.*, p. 340.

17. S. Radhakrishnan and C. A. Moore, *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973) p. 38.

18. "This One is not even a concept. It is not a concept limit like truth, goodness, beauty, and similar concepts when applied to the Absolute; it is rather *the limit of a concept*, unthinkable in itself and yet present on the other side of the

“reduced to the position of being no more than means by which entry to the Brahman can be obtained ...”¹⁹ In the basic unity of Brahman all multiplicity and distinctions got dissolved including also the distinction of one’s own ego. The dissolution of one’s ego in the great ocean of being, the Brahman, became the final goal of man in the *Upaniṣads*. This is sought after and experienced as *mokṣa*, liberation, from the world of pain, sorrow and frustration and hence also from plurality and change.

2. Moksa and the World View of the Upanisads

To go deeper into the meaning of *mokṣa* and its implications, we have to understand it in the context of the basic advaitic trend of thought found in the *Upaniṣads*, which stresses the aspect of unity to the point of a neglect of multiplicity. It is by becoming part of this unity through knowledge that one attains the state of *mokṣa*. Hence we have to consider at least in general out-lines the *Upaniṣadic* vision of reality as a whole and the role of knowledge in attuning oneself to that vision.

curtain as the necessary condition for the very existence and intelligibility of everything” (Panikkar, *The Vedic Experience*, p. 56; emphasis added).

19 In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* we find one of the most striking ‘reductions’ of the multiplicity of Gods. Vidagdha Śākalya asks Yājñavalkya about the number of Gods and the latter gives first the number mentioned in the *Nivid* of the all-Gods (a text in praise of the *viśvedevas*): “Three hundred and three and three thousand and three.” But the unconvinced questioner repeats his question and Yājñavalkya reduces the number gradually and arrives at one finally. (III. 9. 1–9); cf. also Keith, *op. cit.*, p. 581. Yet Panikkar finds a way to assume that the Vedic Gods are real without elaborating “on either the nature or the degree of their reality” (*The Vedic Experience*, p. 11). His invocation of the Vedic Gods to thank them and to offer them his *opus magnum* is certainly impressive (see *ibid.*, p. xxxvii).

2. 1. The One without a second

Although in the Vedas there is already the awareness of the mysterious "One" underlying all reality (cf. *R̥g Veda* I, 164, 6; 46. III, 54, 8 9. VIII, 58, 2. *Atharva Veda* VII, 21), it is the *Upaniṣads* that spell it out sharply as the 'One without a second' (*Ekam evāḥitīyam*). The perception of unity and its significance carry away the Upaniṣadic mind, so that the unity becomes sacred and holy, divine and normative. That is why the concept of unity is closely associated with the concept of Brahman. But the first awareness of the Upaniṣadic thinker was the awareness of the One, the perception that the multiplicity cannot be the ultimate fact about reality. This we find expressed in numerous verses of the Upaniṣads using a variety of images. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* for example instructs that "in one's own mind one should take note that in no way there is plurality" (IV, 11; cf also *Bṛ. Up.* 4. 4. 19).²⁰ The reason is: "What is here is also there, what is there is also here" (*Kaṭha. Up.* IV, 10). According to *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, "it is below and above, in the west and in the east, in the south and in the north; it is the whole world" (VII, xxv, 1.). This all pervading One is "indestructible and perennial, beginningless, endless, greater than the great, remaining eternal" (*Kaṭha. Up.* III, 15). The basic unity of reality, because of its ultimacy and sacredness successively gets the name, Brahman, and philosophy is transformed into theology (cf. *Kena Up.* 4-8). It is then Brahman or the Lord who is all pervading and infinite: "By the Lord enveloped must this all be—whatever moving thing there is in the moving world" (*Iśa Up.* 1).²¹ He is the beginningless, endless, the creator of the world, the one who holds the universe encompassed within him (cf. *Svet. Up.*

20. Unless otherwise indicated, the translation of the Upaniṣadic texts is taken from p. Deussen, *Sixty Upaniṣads of the Vedas* parts 2 (transl. by. V. M. Bedeker and G. B. Palsule. Delhi: Motilal Banersidas, 1980).

21. Transl.: R. E. Hume, *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads* (second revised edition, Oxford University Press, 1931).

V, 13). He is the power behind the various cosmic functions:

As fire (Agni), he warms. He is the sun (Sūrya).
 He is the bountiful rain (Parjanya). He is the wind (Vāyu).
 He is the earth, matter, God,
 Being and Non being, and what is immortal (Prašna
 Up. 2, 5).²²

The quintessence of the Upaniṣadic philosophy of unity, of the all pervasive Brahman is succinctly expressed in the well-known mahāvākyas: "This [is] indeed that" (*etad vai tad*: Kāṭha Up. IV. 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13; V. 1, 4, 8), "That thou art" (*tat tvam asi*: Chānd. Up. VI, x, 3; VI, xi, 3), and "I am Brahman" (*aḥam Brahma asmi*: Bṛh. Up. 1 4, 10). It has to be pointed out, in this article especially, that from the enveloping unity of reality the human being is not exempted; nay he is taken into, and is made to form part of the cosmic unity. The Chānd. Up. is very clear about it; just as the unlimited one is "below and above, in the west and in the east, in the south and in the north" (VII, xxv, 2) so also is the ego-consciousness (*aḥamkāra*): "I (*aḥam*) am below and above, in the west and in the east, in the south and in the north" (Chānd. up. VII, xxv, 2). The mahāvākya about the ego is: "I am Brahman" which means ultimately the same as "This is that" or "That thou art". It is this strict consistency which refuses to give the human being any exemption from the general rule that leads to the doctrine of mokṣa. About this we shall see more in detail later.

However in the Upaniṣads, there is no systematic treatment of the philosophy of non-duality. The systematic development of the doctrine is found in the Advaita School, where the most renowned name is that of Sankara. Drawing inspiration from the Upaniṣads the Advaita School attempts to present the philosophy of non-duality in a systematic way. There is no intention to present here a detailed exposition of the Advaita philosophy.²³

22. Hume's translation.

23. For a survey of the advaita system of philosophy from Upaniṣads to the modern times, see J. Kattackal, *Religion and Ethics in Advaita* (Freiburg: Herder, 1980).

The basic problem which the Advaita philosophy faces is that of multiplicity and change vis à vis its fundamental conviction of the unity of reality. To explain multiplicity Gaudapāda, grand guru of Sankara, proposes the image of pot ether (*ghatākāśa* – the ether contained in a pot) in its relation to the universal ether (*mahākāśa*)²⁴. The ether contained in the pot is the same as the universal ether but restricted and individualised by the pot. Similarly reality is one (*advaita* – non-dual) basically, but appears under different names and shapes (*nāma-rūpa*). The shape would mean also the structure, the constitution that is internal to individual realities, which serve as means (*upādhis*) to the ultimate Unity in order to get diversified into the variety of beings. In the case of the human being the *upādhis* include according to Sankara the mind (*manas*) intellect (*buddhi*), the senses, the nervous system etc.²⁵ Besides the *mahākāśa-ghatākāśa* analogy of Gaudapāda, Sankara employs also other analogies to explain the relationship of non-duality between the individual and the universal, the individual soul and the universal Brahman. For example the 'reflection theory' and the 'fire and spark simile'.²⁶ According to the reflection-theory, "the soul is, like the reflected image of the sun in water, a reflection (*abhāsā*) of the *paramātmā*; neither absolutely identical nor totally different"²⁷. The fire and spark simile is intended to show that the soul is like sparks flying from the burning fire which is Brahman: "The origin of the souls from *Paramātmā* is compared by *śruti* to the issuing of sparks from fire."²⁸ All these analogies which are meant to show how there is non-duality between the individual souls and the ultimate Brahman seem to introduce another duality, namely, the duality of soul and body. But in a comprehensive and radical advaita perspective, there cannot exist any such duality. Thus, the pot-ether analogy is applic-

24. Cf. J. Kattackal *op. cit.*, p. 55.

25. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 89.

26. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 90-91.

27. Sankara, *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya* 2. 3. 50; quoted here from J. Kattackal *op. cit.*, p. 90.

28. Sankara, *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya* 1. 4. 22; quoted here from J. Kattackal *op. cit.*, p. 91.

able not only to the ether in the pot but also to the pot itself, and the reflection theory is true not only of the image reflected in the water but also of water. Hence just as the soul (*ātman*) is non-dual with Brahman, so also the body and every element of it is like-wise non-dual with Brahman. This fact does not seem to be sufficiently taken care of by the interpreters of the *advaita* philosophy.

Insisting on unity, it is the burden of the *advaita* system of thought to explain the fact of plurality and change in the world. It tackles the problem by attempting to explain them away. Accordingly, plurality and change are not understood to be the ultimate *satya* (truth) about reality; they do not affect the core of being, but are the peripheral aspects of it, especially due to the limitations of knowledge. Thus *advaita* permits plurality and change only on a peripheral level which is called the *vyavahara* (empirical) level of reality, whereas in the *paramārtha* (ultimate) level, there is only unity and permanence. If this is the real case with reality to allow this fact to take hold of us and conquer us is our attainment of *mokṣa*, or emancipation.

2. 2. Through Knowledge alone

Now, we enter into the *paramārtha* level of reality beyond all distinction and plurality through the path of *jñāna*, knowledge. Ignorance (*avidyā*) is the original sin which is bondage and which leads to death. "Widely opposite and asunder are these two: Ignorance and what is known as 'knowledge'" proclaims Kaṭha Upanisad (II, 4). Ignorance is also self-delusion and blindness:

Those abiding in the midst of ignorance,
Self-wise, thinking themselves learned,
Running hither and thither, go around deluded,
like blind men led by one who is himself blind

(Kaṭha Up. II, 5).

One who lives in ignorance without using his intelligence will not go beyond the *samsāra*, the realm of birth and death:

He who lives his life without (using his) intelligence
absent-minded and with impure senses--

he does not attain to the place beyond
 he remains entangled in Samsara (cycle of birth) and death.
 He, however, who lives, instead, a life (using his
 intelligence)

with his mind alert and senses pure--
 he attains to the place beyond
 from where there is no birth any more.

(Kāṭha up III. 7-8)

Mahābhārata too is very clear about *jñāna* as the only way to attain emancipation (*mokṣa*). According to it, knowledge alone is capable of cleansing one of all sins (cf. *Santiparva* 321, 46). Even the *sannyāsa* way of life which renounces everything is of little avail to attain *mokṣa*, the ultimate goal without knowledge. On the other hand the possession of riches is no hindrance to *mokṣa* if true knowledge is attained: "Emancipation does not exist in poverty; nor is bondage to be found in affluence. One attains to emancipation through knowledge alone, whether one is indigent or affluent" (*Santiparva* 321-50).²⁹

The importance of knowledge to attain *mokṣa* is stressed also in the advaita system of thought. According to Sankara, *jñāna* is the only means to *mokṣa* (*jñānād eva kaivalyam*).³⁰ Later traditions have tried to modify the insistence on *jñāna*, proposing also other means as *karma* (actions) and *bhakti* (devotion) as equally valid means to attain *mokṣa*. But here the meaning of *mokṣa* becomes adjusted to the popular beliefs. In fact if one follows consistently the theory of *mokṣa*, and keeps to its original meaning it would follow that *mokṣa* is attained only through knowledge. *Karma-mārga* and *bhakti-mārga* are useful and often needed to reach *jñāna* (cf. Kāṭha Up. II, 13), but *mokṣa* is attainable only through *jñāna*. Here, the concept of *jñāna* has to be taken in its fullest meaning according to the Indian traditions and not sifted through the western categories of *gnosis* or knowledge.

29. Quoted from S. Radhakrishnan and C. A. Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 169; cf. also J. W. Hauer, *Der yoga, ein indischer Weg zum Selbst* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1958) pp. 195-209.

30. Cf. J. Kattackal, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

The *Jñāna* which leads to *mokṣa* may be the ordinary kind of knowledge which is at work in the *vyavahāra* world, but the *jñāna* which mediates *mokṣa* is quite different. Just as the Absolute can be named as Being and non-Being, as the ultimate fulness is also *sunyata* (emptiness), *jñāna* when it is equated with *mokṣa* is knowledge as well as non-knowledge. About this *jñāna* through which we become one with Brahman, Kaṭha Up. clearly points out that

Only he who knows it, knows it
He who knows it, knows it not,-
Not known by the knowing-
known by the non-knowing
(Kaṭha V. 11).

That *jñāna* is no ordinary knowledge can be understood also from the fact that it is attained through *yoga* and not through study or research. Through *yoga* the senses are controlled and merged in the *manas* (mind), the *manas* in *buddhi* (intelligence), *buddhi* (intelligence) in the great self (*nahān ātma*) and this one in the *Avyaktam* (the Unmanifest):

The wise one should control speech together with Manas and merge them in the self of consciousness (the *Buddhi*). He should control and merge this (*Buddhi*) in 'the great self' and this 'great self' in the self of rest or repose (i. e. *Avyaktam*)

2. 3. Convergence of Knowledge and Reality

Mokṣa is the merging of our self with the great self, the basic all-pervading unity. It is like the rivers flowing into sea and disappearing in it, giving up their names and forms (Muṇḍ. Up. III. ii. 8), and not as water rained down on the mountain flowing at random down the downward slopes (Kaṭha Up. IV. 14). It is like a lump of salt getting dissolved in the water, so that it is not possible to take it again out of it (Bṛh. Up. II. iv. 12). At this point *jñāna* (knowledge) and reality converge, and the ego-ness or individuality disappears; what remains is sheer being, simple unlimitedness: "When any one does not see any other thing, hear any other thing, does not know any other thing (outside himself), it is the unlimitedness; when he sees any other thing, hears any other thing, sees any

other thing, it is the limited one. The unlimited one is the immortal one, the limited one is the mortal one" (Chând. Up. VII. xxiv. 1). Since *mokṣa* is a matter of being and not of knowing ultimately, or a state where knowledge converges with being it is [even beyond consciousness (Cf. Bṛh. Up. II, iv, 12).³¹ It is the fourth state (*turiya*) according to Gaudapāda's doctrine of *ātman*,³² who follows here the Māndūkya Upaniṣad; the other states are waking, dreaming and sleeping. The *turiya* state is one without measure, ineffable and beyond consciousness (cf Mānd. Up. I, 10ff).³³ It is the attainment of the unlimitedness of being that liberates one from suffering and death, and brings joy and peace :

In whom all beings
Have become just the Self of the discerner—
Then what delusion, what sorrow is there,
Of him who perceives the unity
(Iśa. Up. 7).

31. This applies above all to Brahman, the ultimate reality. Panikkar writes: "Brahman ist nicht nur das Unerkennbare, es erkennt auch nicht. Es hat *nichts* zu erkennen" (R. Panikkar, *Kultmysterium in Hinduismus und Christentum*, Freiburg Munich: Verlag Karl Alber, 1964) p. 33; cf. also *idem*, *The Vedic Experience*, pp. 669-73.

32. Cf. J. Kattackal, *op. cit*, p,

33. The *turiya* state, and, therefore, *mokṣa* is comparable to the Buddhist *nirvāṇa* which is not a state of ontological nothingness but a state of absolute fulness without consciousness (cf. *Samyutta Nik.* 4, 23, 19). In *Bhagavad Gītā* there is the expression, *Brahma nirvāṇa*, where *mokṣa* and *nirvāṇa* are almost identified: "He who finds his happiness, his joy, and his light solely within, that yogin attains *brahma nirvana*" (Bhagavad Gita V, 24; cf. also *ibid.*, II, 72; V, 25). Panikkar writes in this connection: "*Mokṣa* or liberation is here so total that it is considered not only as deliverance from all bonds and limitations but also as liberation from Being itself. The mystical conception of heaven entails the liberation from the concept of Being and even of any shade of 'reality' we may be tempted to give to that 'Being'. *Mokṣa* is here more than the freedom of Being; it is the liberation from it. The silence then reaches an unsurpassable ontological depth. There is nothing to say, because there is nothing." (*The Vedic Experience*, p. 634).

The liberation from sorrow is accompanied by great joy and bliss. Kaṭha Upaniṣad states that one feels the words "This is that" as the inexpressible highest joy (cf. Kaṭha. Up. V. 14). And Chāndogya Upaniṣad proclaims:

The joy consists in unlimitedness (greatness, bhūman); in the limitedness (smallness) there is no joy; only unlimitedness is joy. One must, therefore, seek the unlimitedness (bhūman)

(Chand. VII. xxiii. 1).

Thus *mokṣa*, as the supreme goal of human life has something very special about it in comparison with the understanding of the supreme goal of human life in many other philosophical as well as religious traditions of mankind. To attain *mokṣa* means, in other words, to come to realize existentially the truth about one's being. All the rest follows from that. The peak of the realization of truth is becoming it; to speak about becoming would be inappropriate unless it means only the journey through the *vṛavahāra* world. In fact, there is no becoming, only discovering what was always there, and in that discovery every other longing ceases to be, even death vanishes because death and suffering, desires and yearnings belong to the phenomenal world and therefore not the ultimate characteristic of reality-in-truth, or the way how the case is with reality. In other words, "we throw off the spatio-temporal wrapping and jump, stripped of any contingency or creatureliness, to the other shore, though here the word 'shore' is also inappropriate, for it suggests the existence of another realm."³⁶

34. "What Upaniṣadic Man is interested in is not a return to the old familiar life, not a 'new' old life; not a resurrection, but a 'surrection..." CR. Panikkar, *The Vedic Experience*, p. 643).

35. Cf. R. Panikkar, *Kultmysterium in Hinduismus und Christentum*, p. 32.

36. R. Panikkar, *The Vedic Experience*, p. 542. And about the Vedic experience of death Panikkar writes: "... we could almost say without being too paradoxical that a feature of the Vedic experience is that it treats the problem of death as a non-eschatological question. Death does not belong to the *eschata*, to the last things, but is an accident in the life of

About the attainment of *mokṣa* we can finally summarize the point of view dealt with in this article: 1) There is the ultimate fact of non-duality which is given the name Brahman; 2) If non-duality is the honest truth about reality, we too are implicated in it, which means that our individuality is not the ultimate truth about ourselves. We have to shed our individuality and all that belongs to it so that the ocean of reality can overwhelm us.³⁷ It is like a drop of water merging in the sea and losing its drop-ness and becoming the ocean itself. 3) The process of knowledge, of discovering the truth starts from the world of *vyavahāra*; in its beginning it is an activity, part of *samsara*, the empirical world; there is still the distinction between the knower and the known, the subject and the object. The process of knowledge leads us to a point of convergence between the knower and the known, where there would not be any more distinctions, nor any subject-object dichotomy.³⁸ This is the realm of *mokṣa* of ultimate liberation. And *mokṣa* is attained while fully alive in the body. Eternity is experienced at the heart of time. Permanence is reached in the midst of flux. The idea that complete deliverance takes place only at death is a later development and the theory of *videhamukti* rests on a false supposition that between us and the *ātman* there exists a temporal separation³⁹

the individual and an incident in the life of society. The beyond is the unfathomable ocean which makes the beaches on this side worth walking on and playing on" (*The Vedic Experience*, p. 543-44).

37. Was not Jesus speaking from an 'Upaniṣadic consciousness' when he said: "Whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life will preserve it" (Lk 17: 33)? For an interpretation of the Christian hope of life after death in the line of Upaniṣadic wisdom, see A. Koothottil, "Life 'after' Death: individual Survival or Universal Communion?" *Jeevadhara* 55 (Jan. - Febr. 1980) pp. 63-87.

38. Cf. Panikkar, *The Vedic Experience*, p. 74.

39. Cf. P. Deussen, *The Philosophy of the Upanishads*, p. 357; cf. also C. Valiaveetil, *Liberated Life: Ideal of Jivanmukti in Indian Religions specially in Saiva Siddhānta* (Madurai: Dialogue series 1, 1980) p. 59.

3. The Truth about Mokṣa

How true is the doctrine of *mokṣa*, both in theory and in its actualization in life? A comprehensive critical evaluation is beyond the scope of this article. However, without at least some thought given to it, this article would be very incomplete. The truth about *mokṣa* depends upon the truth about the *advaita* world view. From various sides we experience today that the awareness of unity is on the growth. We are beginning to realize that there is a basic unity enveloping all that is real. Here a convincing evidence is delivered from perhaps the most unexpected quarter, modern physics. It is said to have overcome the classical idea that the independent elementary parts⁴⁰ of the world are the fundamental reality, and has come to the conclusion that inseparable quantum interconnectedness of the whole universe is the fundamental reality.⁴¹ Further, for a scientist today "the world appears as a complicated tissue of events, in which connections of different kinds alternate or overlap or combine and thereby determine the texture of the whole."⁴¹

From the modern science we get also some evidence in favour of the *mokṣa* experience of overcoming the dichotomy between the knower and the known. In the atomic physics, they say, the scientist cannot be a detached observer; he has

40. Cf. Fritjof Capra, *The Tao of Physics* (New York: Bantam Books, 1977), pp. 116ff. This is an interesting book, a pioneer in its field; it points out the astounding similarity between the Eastern wisdom and modern science in the understanding of the nature of reality. Alfred North Whitehead has attempted to develop a philosophical vision of the universe based on the finding of modern science. He has proposed an organic and dynamic view of the universe as one Whole where 'every detail enters into relationship with every other detail, and the final actuality is conceived to be through and through togetherness of all actualities, in such a way that there could be nothing that requires nothing else for its own existence' (cf. A. N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*. New York: Free Press, 1967, p. 25, 174; *idem*, *Religion in the Making*. Cambridge: The University Press, 1927. p. 94).

41. W. Heisenberg, *Physics and Philosophy* (New York: Harper Torch Books, 1958) p. 107; quoted here from F. Capra, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

to involve himself in the world he tries to know, so that his activity of knowing becomes part of the process of reality itself; he becomes a participator and not just an observer.⁴² It is true that modern physics works in a different level and within a different framework; however, it may offer some glimpses into the truthfulness of what the sages call the *mokṣa* experience. Consider, in short, what they say has been the contribution of Quantum theory in the over all understanding of reality:

Quantum theory has abolished the notion of fundamentally separated objects, has introduced the concept of the participator to replace that of the observer, and may even find it necessary to include the human consciousness in its description of the world. It has come to see the universe as an interconnected web of the physical and mental relations whose parts are defined only through their connections to the whole.⁴³

Thus the advaitic or non-dualistic world view has a real foundation in reality.⁴⁴ Although it is an important aspect of the way how reality is in itself, it is not the whole truth. The world of multiplicity and change is real too. The basic defect of the advaita point of view is that it excludes multiplicity and individuality from its core conception of reality, and relegates them to a level which does not matter ultimately. A more adequate conception of the way how reality is should integrate into it both unity and multiplicity, the *vyavahāra* and the *paramārtha* levels of reality. In fact, what has been called the *vyavahāra* level of reality should be given a *pāramārtha* status on the contrasting pole. Hence a more adequate conception of reality should be di polar, one pole of unity and permanence, the other of multiplicity and change, both poles having a *pāramārthika* character.⁴⁵

42. cf. F. Capra, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 129.

44. The data of science alone may not warrant the conclusion we are drawing. But a world view evolved by philosophical reflection on the data of modern science can certainly go a long way with *advaita* philosophy.

45. The concept of 'di-polarity' is taken here from the philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead.

The lack of awareness of this di polarity is also the basic draw back of the experience of *mokṣa*. Those who arrive at the peak experience of unity often succumb, so to say, to the temptation to remain there,⁴⁶ without really letting its impact felt upon the world of multiplicity and change. What is wrong with the Indian spirituality when it comes to concrete practice may be that it disowns the *vyavahāra* world instead of redeeming it from the vantage point of the unity experience.⁴⁷ This perhaps explains the lack of social concern among most of the Indian sages, and the co existence of the perspective of unity with the most appalling discriminations in Indian society. From the point of view of the *mokṣa* experience according to which not only every human being, but also everything real is one with Brahman, how could there be any lower and higher castes, and even out-castes and untouchables? Thus although the experience of *mokṣa* is genuine, it remains one-sided, incomplete and therefore falsified as long as it does not exert its influence on the other pole of reality, namely, the world of plurality.

Also if both the poles, namely, unity and plurality are taken into our understanding of reality, the corresponding experience of *mokṣa* would not stop at realizing what one simply is, but would also strive for the realization of what one is not yet but could become, and that not for oneself alone but for the whole of humanity and even beyond. Thus the world view of Advaita and the ideal of *mokṣa* as the ultimate goal of human attainment, if corrected and completed both on the level of doctrine as well as that of experience can become a powerful gospel towards the realization of a just society in the world, which should be the ultimate goal, the *paramapuruṣārtha* of our collective striving.

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46. Cf. Panikkar, *The Vedic Experience*, p. 648.

47. Panikkar's evaluation of the Vedic attitude in this context as "a harmonizing of polarities and an inclusion of both poles without eliminating either or without sublimating them in such a way that they become no longer recognizable" (*The Vedic Experience*, p. 647) offers more of an ideal picture than the actual fact.

Bhakti: a Meta-Purusartha

The *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*,¹ which offers itself as a guide to all who wish to attain self-fulfilment,² states that the service of the Lord is the "one and only" way to ensure one's welfare whether it be *artha* or *kāma*, *dharma* or *mokṣa*.³ Thus *bhakti* is presented as the safest means to secure the four *puruṣārtha*-s. But *bhakti* is not just that. The *BhP* proposes *bhakti* as the "highest fulfilment" of man.⁴ Hence the man who "surrenders himself" to the Lord experiences *bhakti*, and consequently has no other *artha* to achieve.⁵ For such a man the Lord Himself appears as the "fourfold fulfilment".⁶ It follows, therefore, that all human striving finds its "indefeasible fulfilment" in and through *bhakti*.⁷ Thus, according to the *BhP*, *bhakti* is not only the best *sādhana*, the most effective means to attain the four *puruṣārtha*-s but it is also the ultimate meaning, the *sādhya* of all the *puruṣārtha*-s. If I may be allowed the neologism, *bhakti* is the *meta-puruṣārtha* of all men. In this paper I shall first show how *bhakti* helps man to attain the four *puruṣārtha*-s, and then how it takes him beyond them, yes, even beyond *mokṣā*, traditionally considered to be the highest of the four.

Artha and Bhakti

Kautilya defines *artha* as the "livelihood" of men,⁸ and for this it is necessary to "acquire and possess" the earth.⁹

1. My study is based primarily on the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*, henceforth abbreviated as *Bhp*. I have used the edition published by the Gita Press, Gorakhpur, 1971.

2. Cfr. S. Anand, "The *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*: A Guide for the *Sādhaka*", *purāṇa*, XX-1, pp. 71-86.

3.ekamevā krāṇam. 4,8:41.

4. para-artha, 7,7:55.

5. ātma-nivedin, 11,19:24.

6. caturvidha-artha, 11, 29:33.

7. acyuta-artha, 1,5:22.

8. vṛtti, *Arthaśāstra* 15,1:1.

9. lābha-pālana, *Ibid* 1,1:2; 15,1:2.

Thus *artha* is that aspect of human endeavour through which man uses earthly realities for his subsistence. This may explain why though Kauṭilya's use of "*artha-śāstra*" is translated as "Science of Politics",¹⁰ modern Indian languages use it to mean "Economics".¹¹ Inasmuch as *kāma* and *dharma* presuppose livelihood, or are "made possible by *artha*",¹² this can be considered as "primary".¹³ Manu, while insisting that *artha*, *kāma* and *dharma* are necessary for man's happiness,¹⁴ lays down that the pursuit of the first two should not be "detrimental to *dharma*".¹⁵ This hierarchy is stated by other *dharma*-writers too.¹⁶ The *BhP* too affirms that *artha* is not an end in itself, but totally "subservient to *dharma*".¹⁷ It is this principle of subsidiarity which holds together the four *puruṣārtha*-s and gives them an inner unity. Due to inordinate attachment to earthly realities this inner unity is lost, and since they are meaningful only to the extent that this hierarchy is maintained, attachment to earthly realities is "very detrimental" to all the four.¹⁸ Hence the wise man should use these things "inasmuch as they are needed".¹⁹ *Bhakti* enables man to maintain this right priority.

Earthly realities are all dependent realities. Hence they have no value in themselves, but only to the extent that they lead man to the only self-dependent Real, God. Through *bhakti* man surrenders himself to God and consequently his heart is

10. E. g. R. P. Kangle, *The Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra* (University of Bombay, 1963), pt II, p. 1.

11. E. g. C. Bulcke, *An English-Hindi Dictionary* (Ranchi, Catholic Press, 1968), p. 201.

12. *Arthaśāstra* 1,7:7.

13. *Ibid* 1,7:6.

14. *Manu-smṛti* 2:224.

15. *dharma-varjita*, *Ibid* 4:176.

16. E. g. *Apastamba-dharma-sūtra* 1,7,20:1-4;
Gautama-dharma-sūtra 9:46-7.

Viṣṇu-smṛti 71:84.

17. *dharma-ekānta*, 1, 2:9.

18. *atyanta-vighāta*, 4,22:34.

19. *yāvad-artha*, 2,2:3.

not attached to phenomenal realities.²⁰ Through *bhakti* man acquires a higher knowledge, an intuitive awareness which enables him to see the true character of earthly things and hereby he experiences "detachment".²¹ Love for the Lord enables the devotee to simplify his life, to cut down his needs. If *artha* is essentially meant to take care of man's needs, then the devotee believes that the Lord is more concerned about him than he himself can be, and that the earth can provide him all that he really needs.²² On the other hand, a man devoid of *bhakti* is "blinded by the glamour of wealth" and all that it can offer.²³

If *arthaśāstra* is the science of acquiring and protecting the earth, then today *artha* should be understood not merely in economic terms, but as the involvement in secular affairs. *Artha* is not merely the wealth an individual acquires for himself, but all the effort of man to make this earth more habitable for himself. The *BhP* following the lead of the *Bhagavad-gītā*,²⁴ teaches that man need not renounce his secular responsibility in order to attain perfection. We have the example of King Dhruva who, while continuing to rule his kingdom has his "senses perfectly under control",²⁵ and his "mind fixed on the Lord".²⁶

Not only is *bhakti* not against secular involvement, but on the contrary *bhakti* helps man to be more genuinely concerned about the welfare of others. The *BhP* finds the justifi-

20. The *Bhp* uses a host of expression to bring out this idea of detachment. Cfr. S. Anand, "Spiritual Discipleship as Described by the Bhagavata Purana", *Indian Theological studies*, XV, pp. 34-5.

21. *vairāgya*, 1,2:7.

22. Cfr. 2,2:4-5.

23. *dhana-durmada-andha*, 2,2:5.

24. Cfr. *Bhagavad-gītā* 3:20-22. Here Kṛṣṇa insists that Arjuna should do his duty for the sake of *loka-samgraha*.

25. *avicala-indriya*, 4,12:8.

26. *acalita-smṛti*, 4,12:8.

See also 4,33:49-50, where similar remarks are made about Pṛthu.

cation for this stand in the mystery of Bhagavān Hari Himself. He creates and sustains everything; He leads all creation to its goal; yet He Himself remains unattached, fully free.²⁷ This is true also with regard to His *avatāra*, Kṛṣṇa, who moves about in the world, fully detached, seeking nothing but the "good of the world".²⁸ This is possible because God has in Himself all fullness; He does not need to seek it outside Himself. So too the devotee has in his heart the Lord Himself. What else need he look for?²⁹ As God is one who has His purpose always fulfilled, so too the devotee is "content with what he has".³⁰ If he gets involved in the world, it is not out of personal interest, but because the Lord wants him to do so.³¹ Only in this context does temporal involvement become part of the service rendered to the Lord.³² However the *BhP* is aware that this combination of temporal involvement and the quest for perfection is not easy. Man has to pray that while involved in the world his heart may be fixed on the Lord.³³ The Lord by his grace will definitely sustain his sincere devotee.³⁴ Thus, *bhakti*, by purifying man, makes his secular involvement selfless and thereby authentic.

Kama and Bhakti

Kāma can be understood in a narrow sense as sexual satisfaction, or in a more comprehensive way as aesthetic fulfilment. Like *artha*, *kāma* is not an end in itself. It is not meant merely to satisfy the senses, but to serve the overall purpose of life, that is, the "quest of the Real".³⁵

27. Cfr. 1,3:10.

28. loka-samgraha, 10,80:30.

29. Cfr. 8,1:15.

30. nija-lābha-tuṣṭa, 1,19:25.

31. Cfr. 5,1:23.

32. Cfr. 3,13:12.

33. E g., the prayer of Brahmā when he is commissioned to create the world. He prays that while doing so he may remain from all attachment, his mind fully fixed on Viṣṇu, Cfr. 2,9:28-9.

34. Cfr. 3,9:34, the answer given by Viṣṇu to Brahmā.

35. tattva-jijñāsā, 1,2:10.

The *BhP* describes very vividly what can happen to man when *kāma* becomes a dominating force in his life. For such a man woman is the “door to hell”,³⁶ like a “grass-covered well” leading man to sure death,³⁷ the alluring “call of a hunter” out to trap its victim,³⁸ the fire that sets ablaze a pot full of butter.³⁹ It is not only man that is tempted by sex. Woman too feels its power.⁴⁰ The power of sex is so great that it is easier to conquer the world than to conquer this urge.⁴¹ Except the Lord, all are moved by it.⁴² When the Devas and Asuras are disputing about the ambrosia obtained from the churning of the ocean, Viṣṇu, appearing as a charming woman, distracts the Asuras, thereby depriving them from the drink of life.⁴³ Brahmā, after performing severe penance is still unable to control himself. He is swept off his feet by the charms of his own daughter.⁴⁴ Siva, the great *yogī*, is completely overcome by the beauty of the bewitching damsel, the form taken by Viṣṇu to distract the Asuras.⁴⁵

Perhaps nothing clouds man’s understanding so much as the sexual urge.⁴⁶ It robs man of his judgement,⁴⁷ and he becomes a “fool”,⁴⁸ a “plaything” in the hands of women.⁴⁹ How is it that sex has so universal an appeal? How is it that it is the most blinding force experienced by man? The *BhP*

36. niraya-dvāra, 3,31:39.

37. tṛṇa-āvṛta-kūpa, 3,31:40.

38. mṛgayu-gāyana, 3,31:42.

39. Cfr. 7,12:9.

40. Cfr. 3,14:9, where Diti overcome by desire for her husband tells him that she is like a plantain tree shaken by an elephant.

41. Cfr. 3,31:38.

42. Cfr. 3,31:37.

43. Cfr. 8,8:9.

44. Cfr. 3 12:20-33.

45. Cfr. 8,12:1-40.

46. Cfr. 3,31:35.

47. Cfr. 6,8:30.

48. mūdha, 3,31:34a.

49. kṛidā-mṛga, 3,31:34b.

does not answer these questions directly, but it seems to indicate the direction we must follow to find the answer.

Man's basic possession is his own life, his own body. It is "most dear to him",⁵⁰ his "greatest friend".⁵¹ Even when he has given up all other belongings he still has his body.⁵² It is on account of this body that all other attachments find their place in his heart,⁵³ and conversely, when a man is prepared to part with his body then nothing earthly attracts him.⁵⁴ No wonder, man has a great "desire to live",⁵⁵ and may even refuse to surrender his body to Viṣṇu were he to come "abegging".⁵⁶ But man has only half his body, woman being the other half.⁵⁷ Hence it would be quite natural that he feel strongly drawn to complete his body. By uniting with a woman he feels completion.

Further, though man has a great desire to live, he has no experience of a disembodied existence. For him, then, to live is to live in the body, to exist corporally, to be embodied. Death, however, dispossesses him of his body, and nothing is more certain than death. Sex is nature's way of reconciling these two : man's desire to live and the painful certainty of death. It is precisely because death is so certain that man feels his sex, his faculty of life, so strongly. Sex is the embodiment of man's refusal to die. It is thus the most powerful expression of his corporality. This is why Brahmā, upbraided by his own sons for his unbecoming behaviour towards his daughter, abandons his body,⁵⁸ the root cause of sexuality. It is because sex is essentially a corporal function, that it clouds man's spiritual faculty so intensely. The body discarded by Brahmā becomes the source of all darkness.⁵⁹

50. priyatama, 1,13:20.

51. atīva-suhṛt, 3,23:6.

52. The body is considered the only possession of a wandering ascetic: urvarita-śarīra-mātra-parigraha, 5,5:28; deha-mātra-avaśeṣita, 7,13:1.

53. Cfr. 2,1:15.

54. Cfr. 4,20,6.

55. Jivita-āśā, 1,13:22.

56. bhikṣamāṇa, 6,10:4.

57. deha-ardha, 6,18:30b.

59. Cfr. 3,12:33c.

Kāma is not just the satisfaction of the sexual urge. According to the *Kāma sūtra*, *kāma* is the result of the activity of all the five senses by which they obtain their proper objects.⁶⁰ Thus if *kāma* is to serve the overall purpose of life, then not only the sexual impulse but all the senses need to be restrained. In a way the two are related because the sexual urge is heightened by the activity of all the five senses. *Yoga*, which requires the control of the senses as one of its eight limbs,⁶¹ claims to bring calm to man.⁶² The *BhP* clearly teaches that a man tormented by *kāma* cannot find peace so effectively by the eightfold *yoga* as by serving the Lord,⁶³ and consequently without *bhakti* the laborious process of *yoga* is futile.⁶⁴ The devotee can not only control his senses but can also embrace life-long celibacy,⁶⁵ for he experiences the grace of the Lord.⁶⁶

That *bhakti* enables man to keep *kāma* within bounds and even to renounce it completely should not be difficult to understand if we see the deeper meaning of human sexuality. *Inter alia*, sexuality is the expression of the essentially fragmentary character of human existence: the human person is either male or female. He or she is only half of the human possibility, and consequently he or she longs to become whole, and this even pre-consciously. Thus sexuality is but one manifestation, albeit a powerful one, of the more profound fragmentation of man: he is scattered in space and time, in *samsāra*. At no point either in space or time can he be fully present to himself. Only the Lord, who is both man and woman, the Ardhanārīśvara, is totally present to Himself. By being what He is God is "fulness" itself,⁶⁷ and consequently

60. Cfr. P. V. Kane, *History of Dharmasastra* (Poona, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute 1941), II-1, p. 9, ft. note 22.

61. *Yoga-sūtra* 2:29, 54.

62. *Ibid* I:2.

63. Cfr. 1,6:36.

64. Cfr. 3,25:19; 10,51:61.

65. Cfr. 3,12:5.

66. Cfr. 1,6:32.

67. *Pūrṇa*, 8,1:16.

the "total fulfilment" of all,⁶⁸ and hence all who surrender themselves to Him do not perish. Through *bhakti* man attains Him who is "Bliss itself" and so lacks nothing.⁶⁹ This does not mean that *bhakti* is some form of substitute for *kāma*. It is a more radical fulfilment of man, thereby making *kāma* futile. Through *bhakti* man experiences an ecstasy, a standing-out of time and space even if for a short moment, but this experience is a foretaste of the eventual liberation from *samsāra*, a foretaste of his final fulfilment.

Kāma can be understood as aesthetic fulfilment. The depth of an aesthetic experience depends both on the object and the person involved in the experience. The *Bhp* presents *bhakti* as the highest aesthetic experience. The devotee is disposed for this, being a "man of taste";⁷⁰ he can "discern beauty".⁷¹ On the other hand, God is "the abode of all beauty",⁷² and hence "the most charming to look at".⁷³ He is ever youthful and so ever new.⁷⁴ *Bhakti* is "the desire to look at the Lord",⁷⁵ and "this seeing is a great festival",⁷⁶ leading to "the highest joy",⁷⁷ a joy that inundates the whole person of the devotee, "making his hair stand".⁷⁸

Dharma and Bhakti

The *Bhp* begins by claiming that its purpose is to set forth the highest *dharma* of saints.⁷⁹ That which leads to selfless and steadfast devotion to the Lord is "the highest *dharma* of

68. Pūrṇa-artha, 8,1:15,

69. ānanda, 11,26:30.

70. rasika, 1,1:3

71. rasa-jña, 1,1:19

72. sakala-sundara-saṁniveśa, 11, 1:10

73. darśanīyatama, 3,28:16.

74. Cfr. 3,28:17; 1,11:33.

75. bhartṛ-darśana-lālasā, 1,11:33

76. tad-ikṣaṇa-mahā-utsava, 1,11:24.

77. para-ānanda, 3,19:33.

78. prahr̥ṣṭa-roma, 3,15:5.

79. Cfr. S. Anand, "The Bhāgavata-purāṇa: A Guide for the Sādhaka", pp. 72-5.

men".⁸⁰ Therefore, any *dharma*, even if it be carefully fulfilled, but if it does not produce devotion to the Lord, is "but drudgery".⁸¹ On the other hand, *dharma* well-performed finds its consummation in *bhakti*.⁸² But *bhakti* is not merely the result of *dharma*. The *Bhp* identifies *dharma* with *bhakti*.⁸³

Dharma is a *puruṣārtha* because, *inter alia*, it leads to an experience of "inner contentment".⁸⁴ The *Bhp* teaches that it is only when man has *bhakti* towards the Lord that he can "fully experience peace",⁸⁵ while all the other observances "bring only passing happiness".⁸⁶ Why is it that *bhakti* brings man deep peace and joy? The *Bhp* does not directly answer this question, but we can put two together and find the reason. We have already seen that the *Bhp* claims that *bhakti* is the highest *dharma* of man. It also says that there is no greater *a-dharma* than *a-satya*.⁸⁷ Could we not reverse this statement and say that *satya* is the highest *dharma*. Thus we will be saying that *bhakti* and *satya* are both the highest *dharma* of man. What would that point to?

The word *satya* is the verbal adjective of the root *as* (to be), and it may be translated as "that which ought to be".⁸⁸ Hence when one has *satya*, one has, or rather, one is what he ought to be, i. e., he has an authentic existence.⁸⁹

80. ... pumsām paro dharmah. 1, 2:6

81. ...śrama eva. 1,2:8.

82. Cfr. 1,2:13.

Kṛṣṇa tersely defines *dharma* as *mad-bhakti-art*. 11,19:27.

83. Cfr. 6,3:22:

See also S. Anand, 'Bhakti the Bhāgavata Way to God', *Purana*, XXII-2, pp. 204-7.

84. ātma-tuṣṭi, *Manu-smṛti* 2:12.

85. ...yayā'tmā saṁprasidati. 1,2:6.

86. kṣulla-sukha-āvaha, 3,5:10.

87. ...na hyasatyāt paro'dharmah. 8,20:4.

88. Cfr. F. Kielhorn, *A Grammar of the Sanskrit Language* (Varanasi, Chawkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, rep. 1970), pp. 238-42, and 274.

89. Cfr. S. Anand, "Satyam eva jayate", *Mission in India* (Poona, Ishvani Kendra Series no. 7, 1979), pp. 5-13.

One has a fully authentic existence only when he is fully what he ought to, and therefore can, be. This authentic existence calls for the total actualisation of the potentiality of being. It is only then that one can reach the point of perfect calm, the state of perfect self-possession. Now, if *satya* and *bhakti* are both the highest *dharma* of man, then the former is the form and the latter the content of *dharma*. To put it differently it is man's duty to actualize his deepest possibility, and this he can do through loving devotion to the Lord.

Bhakti is the fulness of *satya*, the total realization of man this for two reasons. First, it is the actualisation of the deepest potency of man, that is, the power to love. Second, in *bhakti* this love is directed to Him who is Himself *SATYA*,⁹⁰ and consequently "the most worthy of love".⁹¹ Thus when man acquires the highest *bhakti* for the Lord he reaches the end of his pilgrimage. Consequently he experiences the fulness of peace. Like St. Augustine of Hippo, the *bhakta* exclaims: "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you".⁹²

Dharma is not merely to help the individual. It aims also to bring about a certain order in the society. The early thinkers experienced order in the cosmos (*ṛta*), and found this to be a source of well-being. So too it was believed that order in the society (*dharma*) is a source of happiness. The *varṇa-āśrama* structure of the Hindu society was the framework for the thinking of the *dharma*-writers, who, therefore, primarily concerned themselves with the *varṇa-āśrama-dharma*.⁹³ Today we are becoming more and more conscious of the limitations and defects, if not inherent at least factual of the *varṇa* system. *Bhakti* is one answer to this problem. As a meta-value it does not cancel the positive aspects of the traditional structure but takes man beyond them.

90. Para-satya, 1,1:1.

91. preṣṭhah san preyasāmapī. 3,9:49.

92. J. K. Rayan (tr.), *The Confessions of St. Augustine* (New York, Image Books, 1960), p. 44.

93. Kane, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

The *Bhp* repeatedly affirms that the *bhakta* is a man of universal charity. He is "equally disposed to all",⁹⁴ "views all equally",⁹⁵ "has mercy for all",⁹⁶ "is friendly to all",⁹⁷ "desires the welfare of all",⁹⁸ and "is helpful to all".⁹⁹ One leacher, "an expert in the science of the spirit",¹⁰⁰ classifies the devotees into three grades. The highest *bhakta* makes no distinction, but loves all; while the second- and third-rate *bhaktas* love God and other devotees, or only God, respectively.¹⁰¹ A real devotee does not make the distinction of mine and not-mine, but "views all equally".¹⁰²

Earlier I discussed the relation between *bhakti* and *satya* and stated that through *bhakti* alone man attains *satya*. The *Bhp* defines *satya* as "viewing all equally".¹⁰³ One cannot attain the highest form of *bhakti* without inculcating love for all men. Love for man is the best service a devotee can offer to God,¹⁰⁴ and without this love for all, worship is but a mockery, it being as good as pouring the offering into the ashes.¹⁰⁵ Real *bhakti* fosters universal brotherhood.¹⁰⁶

Man's well being presupposes not only order within the society but also order within the cosmos. The *Bhp* suggests that the more a man is governed by *dharma* the more effectively does he become present in the cosmos, thereby enhancing

94. Sarva-bhūta-sama, 11,2:52; samāna-uttama madhyama-adhama, 4,20:13.

95. Sama-dṛś, 1,4:4; sama-darśin, 11,26:27; tulya-darśana, 1,5:24.

96. Sarva-bhūta-dayā, 3,9:12.

97. Maitra, 3,27:8; sarva-dehi-suhṛt, 3,25:21.

98. Sarva-bhūta-hita-ātma, 4,22:18.

99. Sarva-upakāraka, 11,11:29.

100. Atma-vidyā-viśārada, 11,2:20.

101. Cfr. 11,2:45-7.

102. Cfr. 11,2:52.

103. satyam ca samadarśanam. 11,19:37.

104. Cfr. 3,9:12.

105. Cfr. 3,29:21-2.

106. Cfr. 9,21, where we have the moving story of King Rantideva who shares the only meal he has with a Brāhmin, a Sūdra, and an outcaste.

its availability to man.¹⁰⁷ All creatures submit themselves to the man with whom the Lord is pleased; they bow to him "as instinctively as waters flow downwards."¹⁰⁸ Man is part of the universe, nay, its most concentrated point, being the only being that has self awareness. Through *bhakti* he becomes more and more authentic, and *satya* becomes more and more visible in him. His life is bound to be a source of cosmic healing.¹⁰⁹

According to the *āśrama* way of life, the *brahmacāri* was not really in a position to pursue *artha* and *kāma*. These two *puruṣārtha*s were in a way the exclusive preserve of the *gṛhastha*. The householder was expected to think of *mokṣa* only after he has fulfilled the debt to the seers, the debt to the ancestors, and the debt to the gods.¹¹⁰ It seems that the Sūdra could not attain *mokṣa*, for by serving the twice-born, and by fulfilling his own household duties, he could obtain the benefits of all the *āśrama*s, "except *mokṣa* which is possible only for a wandering ascetic".¹¹¹ The only *āśrama* open to the Sūdra was the *gṛhastha*¹¹². Since *bhakti* is a *meta-puruṣārtha*, it pervades the entire *varṇa āśrama* structure, serving as the *sādhāraṇa-dharma* of all the four castes and also of the outcaste.

The *Bhp* clearly states that just because one is born in a high caste one does not have any spiritual advantage,¹¹³ for all this without *bhakti* is an "empty show".¹¹⁴ On the other hand even a Sūdra can please the Lord.¹¹⁵ Contrary to the stand taken by the *dharmaśāstra*-writers, the *Bhp* emphatically teaches

107. When Yudhiṣṭhira, the "foremost among the pious rulers" (*dharmabhṛtām varīṣṭhah*....1,10:1), ruled the earth, there was enough rain, the earth provided all that man needed, the cattle yielded plenty of milk, the trees bore abundant fruit, and everybody was happy. Cfr. 1,10:4-6.

108 *nimnamāpa iva svayam*. 4,9:47.

109. Cfr. S. Anand, "Satsanga: The Company of Saints", C.M. Vadakkekara (ed.), *Prayer and Contemplation* (Bangalore, Asirvanam, 1980), pp. 287-9.

110. *Manu-smṛti* 6:36.

111. *parivrājakaphalam mokṣam varjayitvā*. Medha-tithi on *Manu-smṛti* 6:97.

112. Kane, *op. cit.*, pp. 154-64.

113. Cfr. 7,7:51.

114. Vidambana, 7,7:52.

115. Cfr. 3,6:33.

that all men and women can attain perfection,¹¹⁶ for all, even the dog-eaters, can love and serve the Lord,¹¹⁷ and he can be found only through *bhakti*. Similarly all the *āśrama*-s respect *bhakti*,¹¹⁸ it being the *dharma* of the *parama-hansa*-s.¹¹⁹

Jivanmukti and Bhakti

The earliest Vedic seers were happy with life and they hoped to live long, have plenty of wealth, and father a large family. Slowly they began to feel life on earth a tragedy and longed to get out of *samsāra*: they longed for *mokṣa*. Gradually it dawned on them that they could have deep inner peace while still in *samsāra*, that they could become *jīvan-mukta*. This inner peace can be experienced by man only when he has a deep awareness of God, a full control of his senses and instincts, and detachment from all passing things. The *jīvan-mukta* experiences great joy, and his spiritual fervour is a source of blessing for others.¹²⁰ According to the *BhP*, not only is *jīvan-mukti* the result of *bhakti*, but also the prerequisite for the practice of *bhakti* in its highest form.

I have already explained how *bhakti* enables man to control his senses and instincts, and to be detached from all earthly realities. The *BhP* also insists that a man can come to the true knowledge of God only when his search is "sustained by devotion".¹²¹ Without *bhakti* all human effort is bound to fail.¹²² The saving knowledge of God is "the highest secret",¹²³ and man can attain this knowledge, only as the Lord says: "by my grace".¹²⁴ Then man gets an "intuitive knowledge" of God.¹²⁵

116. Cfr. 7,7:54.

117. Cfr. 11,14:21.

118. *Sarva āśrama-namaskṛta*, 1,3:13.

119. Cfr. 5,5:28.

120. Cfr. S. Anand, "Jivan Mukti or Liberation in This Life," Vadakkekara, *op. cit.*, pp. 181-90.

121. *Bhakti-bhāṣita*, 11,19:5.

122. Cfr. 1,3:37-8; 1,5:12.

123. *Parama-guhya*, 2,9:30.

124. *madanugrahāt*, 2,9:31; *matprasādena*, 3,27:28.

125. *Ahaituka-jñāna*, 1,2:7.

The *BhP* also shows how the man of deep *bhakti* is also a man of deep peace and joy. The man without *bhakti* undergoes an inner turmoil, being disturbed by his senses "which are always running outside", ¹²⁶ which so to say are an eccentric force. Through *bhakti* man finds his centre in God, and even though he feels his natural impulses he can overcome them through *bhakti*.¹²⁷ Being fully detached, human wickedness does not rob him of his peace;¹²⁸ he realizes that God's power is greater than that of man. He is like a mountain that is not shaken by any storm, -¹²⁹ being firmly rooted in "the love of the Lord".¹³⁰ When offended, he is fully prepared to forgive,¹³¹ for to forgive is the "highest *dharma*",¹³² the "highest act of charity".¹³³

Nowhere does the *BhP* use the terms *jīvan mukti* or *videha mukti*, but it seems to be aware of this distinction.¹³⁴ Vidyanarāyaṇa, the author of the *Jīvan-mukti viveka*,¹³⁵ thinks that the term *guṇa atīta* in the *Bhagavadgītā*¹³⁶ indicates the *jīvan-mukta*.¹³⁷ It is no mere coincidence then that the *BhP* speaks of the highest form of *bhakti* as *nirguṇa*.¹³⁸ The lower forms of *bhakti* are motivated by personal gain, even though these motives may be very noble; the highest form of devotion is the result of man being drawn to the Lord "merely by listening to an account of the goodness of the Lord".¹³⁹ Hence to have this highest form of *bhakti*, the devotee himself must be "beyond the *guṇas*".¹⁴⁰

126. *Sarva-indriya-bāhya-vartana*, 6,16:33.

127. Cfr. 11,14:18. 128. Cfr. 3,1:16.

129. Cfr. 10,20:15. 130. *Baddha sauhṛda*, 4,20:12.

131. Cfr. 1, 7: 47; 1, 18: 41-50.

132. *para-dharma*, 7, 15: 8.

133. *para-dāna*, 11, 19: 37.

134. E. g., "*siddha*" and "*samsiddha*" are used both for those who have died and for those who are still alive.

135. He lived in the 14th century. Cfr. S. Anand, "*Jīvan-mukti...*", p. 180.

136. Cfr. 4: 12-26.

137. Cfr. S. Anand, "*Jīvan-mukti...*", p. 184.

138. Cfr. 3, 29: 12.

139. *mad-guṇa-śruti-mātreṇa*, 3 29: 11.

140. *nairguṇya-stha*, 2, 1: 7; ... *ativrajya triguṇān*, 3, 29: 14.

Beyond Mokṣa

The *BhP* teaches that it is only through *bhakti* that man can attain "the highest perfection".¹⁴¹ But there are some statements in the *BhP* that puzzle the reader: *bhakti* is considered "higher than even *siddhi*";¹⁴² even among the many liberated and perfected sages a devotee of Narayana is "not easily found";¹⁴³ or even more boldly, the devotees of the Lord are not eager for "final beatitude",¹⁴⁴ even though it is the "highest *puruṣārtha*".¹⁴⁵ Sṛīdhara, considered to be the most authentic commentator on the *BhP*, explaining the text under consideration, says that the *BhP* is here presenting *bhakti* as the highest *puruṣārtha*, and the reason why the devotee ignores even the final beatitude is that by lovingly surrendering all to the Lord "all the *puruṣārtha*s are truly obtained".¹⁴⁶ Thus the *BhP* presents *bhakti* not merely as the way to *mokṣa* but also as something more than *mokṣa*.

In what way is *bhakti* more than *mokṣa*? In one place we are told that the Lord may grant *mukti* to those who worship him, but He does not give them "an abiding union with Him brought about by *bhakti*".¹⁴⁷ Sṛīdhara merely adds an emphasis: The Lord "never gives them an abiding union brought about by loving devotion."¹⁴⁸ It seems to me that two things become clear. First, we have the idea that *bhakti* is a gift of the Lord. Not only is it difficult,¹⁴⁹ but just not possible even for great spiritual persons by themselves to have *bhakti*.¹⁵⁰ Man can only respond to the call of the divine flute! Man can purify himself, overcome all attachments and thus become

141. *siddhi*, 1, 15: 51.

142. ... *siddhargarīyasī*, 3, 25: 33.

143. *su-drulabha*, 6, 14: 5.

144. *ātyantika-apavarga*, 5, 6: 17.

145. *parama-puruṣārtha*, 5, 6: 17.

146. *samyak prāptāḥ sarve puruṣārthāḥ*.

147. *bhakti-yoga*, 5, 6: 18.

148. *natu kadācidapi sapremabhaktiyogam*.

149. Cfr. 10, 47: 25.

150. Cfr. 6, 14: 2.

a *mukta*, a free person, but this does not mean that he has love for God in his heart. For this he needs to be loved and graced by the Lord. *Bhakti* in its highest form is *nirguṇa*, i. e., beyond all created effort.

Further, during his pilgrimage here on earth a faithful devotee may acquire complete detachment, complete freedom from all that pertains to *samsāra*, and thus become a *jīvan-mukta*, but it is only at the end of his spiritual journey, i. e., after his death, that he obtains that contemplative vision of the Lord, that definitive loving union (*sa-prema bhakti-yoga*), from which no return is possible.¹⁵¹ To be united to the Lord in such a way as to be never more separated from Him, man has to be born anew. In the present birth, in *samsāra*, he cannot fully attain the Lord.¹⁵² As long as he is in *samsāra*, in time and space he is bound to be fragmented. To be fully united to the Lord man has in some way to share in the eternity of God. For this he needs to die.¹⁵³

From what we have said, it becomes clear that while *bhakti* helps to free man from *samsāra*, freedom from *samsāra* is essential for the realization of *bhakti* in its highest form. *Bhakti* is both, the way and the goal, the *sādhana* and the *sādhya*. *Apara-bhakti* slowly purifies man, frees him from all that impedes his definitive union with the Lord. Thus *mokṣa* is a preparation for *para bhakti*. This may explain why the *BhP* considers *satsanga* as the most potent means of fostering devotion to the Lord.¹⁵⁴ the ultimate destiny of man is an unending *SAT-sanga*, a loving communion with Him who is the supremely authentic One.¹⁵⁵ It is because *satsanga* here on

151. Cfr. 1, 15: 44.

152. Cfr. 1, 6: 22. See also S. Anand, "Jīvan-mukti...", p. 206.

153. Cfr. 3, 33: 30; 4, 12: 35. In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, one must become *brahma-bhūta* before attaining *para-bhakti* (18:54). In the *BhP*, Pṛthu and Parīkṣit become *brahma-bhūta* before they die (4 23:13; 12, 6:10).

154. Cfr. 1, 2:18; 2, 3: 11.

155. *para-satya*, 1, 1:1.

earth anticipates *SAT-sanga* after death, that devotees prefer *satsanga* even to escape from rebirth.¹⁵⁶ *Mokṣa* is not merely freedom from rebirth, escape from *samsara*; it is freedom for *para-bhakti*. The *vastra-haraṇa* precedes the *rāsa-līlā*. It is only when the *gopis* appear completely naked before Kṛṣṇa that he agrees to dance with them.¹⁵⁷

Towards a Personalistic Understanding of Reality

To understand the ultimate destiny of man in terms of a loving union with God means that we conceive God in a personalistic way. The *BhP* qualifies the ultimate reality as *saguṇa* and *nirguṇa*: the latter term is usually translated as impersonal. But as I have shown elsewhere, such a translation does violence both to the early *śruti*-text where this term first occurs, and to the *BhP* where it is used frequently.¹⁵⁸ According to the *BhP*, the ultimate reality is essentially personal.¹⁵⁹ If man finds his fulfilment in *para bhakti*, if through *bhakti* all the other *puruṣārtha*-s are attained and perfected, then it follows that his nature is deeply personal. Any understanding of *puruṣārtha*-s that ignores this personal character of man is bound to be destructive. If *artha* is not to become a materialistic quest, if *kāma* is not to become a passionate longing, if *dharma* is not to become a legalistic structure, if *mokṣa* is to be really the experience of freedom, then man's personhood must be our primary concern. Since man is a person, love is his most authentic way of being and self-communicating. Since God is the most personal being, love for God is the most profound fulfilment of man, it is truly the *parama-puruṣārtha* or, as we have put it, the *meta-puruṣārtha* of all men.

Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth

Subhash Anand

Pune

156. Cfr. 1, 18: 13; 4, 24:57; 4, 30: 34.

157. Cfr. 10, 22:16-27.

158. Cfr. S. Anand, "Saguṇa or Nirguṇa" *Purāṇa*, XXI-I, pp. 49-57.

159. Cfr. *Ibid.* pp. 58-63.

The Christian Purusarthas: Meaning and Goals of Life in Jesus' Teachings

A. The Goals of Life in Classical Hinduism

From early times classical Hindu tradition has spelled out the significance of human life in terms of its four *puruṣārthas*, the so-called 'goals' of human existence.¹ These are listed as *artha* (material possessions), *kāma* (sexual, emotional or aesthetic satisfaction), *dharma* (the fulfilment of religious and ethical obligations) and *mokṣa* (final liberation). These four goals of human life if indeed they are 'goals' and not, as Karl Potter very plausibly suggests, a graded series of 'attitudes' towards persons and things, ranging from one of minimum concern and maximum attachment (*artha and kāma*) to one in which concern is maximum and attachment minimum (*dharma* and eventually *mokṣa*)²—are not of a piece. *Mokṣa* or total liberation is the supreme goal (*paramapuruṣārtha*). It is not on a level with the others, which, collectively, form the *trivarga* or 'group of three'. *Mokṣa* is, in fact, the goal of the other goals: for the possession of material goods, the satisfaction of sexual and emotional needs, and even the fulfilment of religious and ethical obligations, become meaningful (become, that is, *puruṣārthas*, things that mediate significance to human life) only when rightly pursued they communicate the experience of liberation. The first three goals, each with its specific body of technical literature (cf. the *Arthasāstra* of Kautilya, the *Kāmasūtras* of Vatsyayana and the various collections of *dharmaśāstras*, the

1. Cf. Pandurang Vaman Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra* (Poona, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute), Vol. II/ 1 (1941) 8; and Vol. V (1962) 1510.

2. Karl H. Potter, *Presuppositions of India's Philosophies* (New Delhi: Prentice Hall, 1965) 5-10.

best known being the one attributed to Manu), belong to 'this world', to the empirical, *vyavahārika* dimensions of human existence. *Mokṣa*, on the other hand, which, though it forms the ultimate horizon of all religious thinking in India, has no technical literature formally dedicated to it (if we except the *Mokṣadharma* section of the twelfth part, the *Sāntiparva* of the Mahabharata—for this is not, properly speaking, technical literature), is a transcendent goal. It is in a sense "opposed to the first three",³ because it leads to the *paramārthika*, the really-real aspects of human existence. It designates that is, the total freedom which results from the experience of the absolute within, and from the resultant awareness of the radical relativity of all empirical reality.

Together, these four *puruṣārthas* give us an unusually clear-cut and systematic description of the classical Hindu ideal of human existence. Though focussing sharply on ultimate liberation (*mokṣa*), this ideal is far more concerned with the material fulfilment of man (the satisfaction of his need for possessions, for companionship and for meaning) than facile Western characterizations of Hinduism as 'other worldly' would lead us to expect. The Hindu ideal is in fact strikingly 'this-worldly' because it supposes that it is only through the satisfaction of these basic human needs (the *trivarga*), and not by by-passing them, that ultimate liberation (*mokṣa*) will be achieved.⁴ *Mokṣa*, Heinrich Zimmer reminds us,

is to be understood, not as a refutation, but as the final flowering, of the success of the successful man... Not before but after one has accomplished the

3. Kane, *Dharmasāstra* (n. 1 above) V, 1511.

4. Cf. *Manusmṛiti* VI, 36-37: "Having duly studied the Vedas and begotten sons according to law, and sacrificed according to his ability with sacrifice, he should fix his mind on deliverance. A twice-born man not having studied the Vedas, and not having begotten a son, and also not having sacrificed with sacrifices, who desires deliverance, goes downward [into hell]" — quoted from *Hindu Polity (The Ordinances of Manu)*, translated by Arthur Durnell and Edward Hopkins (Ludhiana: Kalyani Publishers, rp 1972) 139.

normal worldly aims of the individual career, after one's duties have been served as a moral member and supporter of the family and community, one turns to the tasks of the final human adventure.⁵

For the ideal life, as classical Hinduism sees it (for the upper class male at least—for women and lower castes are excluded from the system),⁶ comprises of four different stages or *āśramas*—that of the celibate student, serving his guru in order to be instructed in the sacred lore (*brahma-ārya*), that of the householder bringing up a family and supporting it through his 'secular' toil (*gṛhastha*), that of the hermit who retires into the forest for meditation and penance (*vānaprastha*), and, last of all, that of the wandering ascetic who, tied to no place and shunning all attachment seeks liberation through total renunciation (*sannyāsa*).⁷

Such an ideal of human existence is very characteristic of Hinduism's holistic way of thinking. It stands in sharp contrast to the specialized life styles proposed by Christian (specifically Roman Catholic and Orthodox) spiritualities where some are called to be 'householders' without being expected to eventually transcend this by renunciation (*sannyāsa*), while others (the 'more perfect') are called to live a life of renunciation without having experienced the responsibilities of raising a family or supporting a home (*gṛhastha*).

Two very different conceptions of human life are obviously implied here. The fulness of human existence which

5. Heinrich Zimmer, *Philosophies of India* (Princeton University Press, 1969) 44. There is an excellent section on the *puruṣārthas* on pp. 34-37.

6. Not only are women and outcastes excluded, but according to some lawcodes like the *Vaikhanāsa-Dharma-Sūtra* at least, all four *āśramas* are accessible only to the brahmins (who alone are judged capable of *sannyāsa*). The first three are available to the kshatriyas, the first two to the vaishyas, and only that of the householder to the shudras, who are not permitted the study of the Vedas — cf. Haran Chandra Chakladar, "Social Life in Ancient India" in *The Cultural Heritage of India, Volume III* (Calcutta: Belur Nath, n.d.), 174.

7. *Ibid.*, 170-83.

Hinduism expects of the twiceborn *individual* is to be realized in Christianity in a diversified *community*, conceived of as an organic unity (a 'body'), whose parts are endowed with specialized functions (1 Cor 12, 4-30). The individual in Hinduism thus corresponds to the community in Christianity! This is no accident. For the specialized life roles assigned to individuals in the Christian tradition, derive ultimately from the Christian understanding that the human person is essentially communitarian, the individual conceivable only as part of a whole. Even if in their present highly institutionalized forms such specialized religious roles (in some Churches at least) may reflect the fragmented specialization of bourgeoisie production,⁸ they are in essence part of the Christian experience itself. For they are expressions of the basic Christian understanding that the human person is not an autonomous individual, and that his 'liberation' is not to be sought in isolation, but as part of the liberation of the whole human community, to which he must contribute by fulfilling his allotted role.

Hinduism too is of course not without a communitarian dimension, as is clear from its ideal of the *āśramas* and its functioning institution of caste - an elaborate social structure of complementary, hierarchically organized roles, unparalleled for its complexity, rigidity and oppressiveness. *Dharma* is, in fact, spelled out in terms of family and caste duties: it is primarily *kula-jāti dharma*.⁹ But these forms of *dharma* belong to the *grhastha* stage of *āśramas*, and so are part only of the

8. Church structures have always reflected the ambient social order. As J. Gilchrist remarks, *a propos* the mediaeval church: "A number of studies suggest that the clergy at all times reflect the general social order. We are familiar enough with the feudalization of the Church to realize this". Not only did the mediaeval clergy conform to their secular peers (so that the prior of a monastery was socially a baron and the monks a squirearchy but it was, Gilchrist suggests, precisely the recruitment of sons of merchants into the clergy that "enabled the Church to pass from its compromise with feudalism to a compromise with capitalism" — J. Gilchrist, *The Church and Economic Activity in the Middle Ages* (London: Macmillan, 1969) 135-36.

9. Cf. B. Kuppaswami, *Dharma and Society: A Study in Social Values* (Delhi: Macmillan, 1977) 22.

individual's pilgrimage towards liberation. He must indeed pay his 'debts' to family, society and the cosmic order, without which his existence would be impossible.¹⁰ But his ultimate aim is to transcend all these. Ideally, the householder will become the hermit, and the hermit become the wholly un-committed wandering ascetic (*sannyāsin*). The true goal of the *puruṣārthas* is thus not a 'classless society' but a 'classless individual'—one who has "transcended all distinctions and diversities of caste and creed, race and colour" and who "does not even belong to a Religion and disowns the authority of the State".¹¹ And if today such a 'classless individual' is proposed as the basis of a classless society,¹² because (it is said) in "man perfected" (the *jīvanmukta* of the Vedāntins or the *sthīraśīla* of the Bhagavadgita) the inward movement towards self realization having reached its goal will reverse itself into an outward movement towards the world, using "the moral and spiritual force it has acquired to lead the world to its perfection",¹³ this is surely the result of interaction with the social values of the 'Christian' West. It is not characteristic of classical Hinduism, for which the supreme value has always been the "complete freedom" which comes from "immunity to the pressures and pulls of desire for objects of various kinds and for approval of others".¹⁴ and in which the social goal is not a 'classless society' but a few 'free' individuals living on the margins of a rigid and highly stratified social structure.

10. Chakladar, "Social Life" (n. 6 above) 167: "the path of duty (*dharma*) lies through the discharge of debts which a person owes to all about him—to his fellows in the community, to his forefathers, to all sentient beings... We find this sense of debts working in the Indian mind at all stages of the evolution of Indian civilization".

11. N. A. Nikam, "Individual and Society in Indian Thought", in *Indian Philosophical Annual, Volume Six*, ed. T. M. P. Mahadevan (Madras: Centre of Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras, 1970) 43.

12. *Ibid.*,: "The test of a 'classless' society is whether it creates a 'classless' individual".

13. B. G. Gokhale, *Indian Thought Through the Ages: A Study of Some Dominant Concepts* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1961) 213.

14. N. K. Devaraja, "Indian Values", in *Indian Philosophical Annual, Volume Six* (n. 11 above) 54.

B. The Purusarthas and the Christian Religious Vows

We come here to a very basic difference between the two traditions, one which makes any search for equivalents to the *puruṣārthas* of classical Hinduism in the teachings of Jesus risky. Correspondences that we may find are bound to be misleading, because they will refer to wholly different ways of thought. In any case, the New Testament belongs to a more immediate (and therefore to a less conceptualized) expression of religious experience than do the *dharmaśāstras* in which the *puruṣārthas* have been formulated. We cannot hope to find in the New Testament a formulation of the 'goals of life' as neat and systematic as the one which the *puruṣārthas* of classical Hinduism offer. What one does find in the New Testament, and in the teachings of Jesus in particular, is a vision of man and society in which such goals are implicit.¹⁵ These have been spelled out in later Christian tradition in terms of the three 'ideals' or 'religious vows' of poverty, chastity, and obedience—which correspond strikingly to the first three of the *puruṣārthas* of classical Hinduism.¹⁶ Traditionally these three ideals have been institutionalized (in the pre Reformation Churches at least) into religious 'vows' which define the status of the specialized group of 'religious'. But they designate in fact, the goals of all Christian existence. For religious life in the Christian communities is not a specifically different type of existence, but is merely Christian life (the 'following of Jesus') lived out in all its radicalness.¹⁷ What is true of religious life (and of the 'vows' which define it) will be true essentially of Christian existence as such. An exploration of these 'ideals' or 'vows' of the Christian religious life, against the background of the *puruṣārthas* of classical Hinduism may help, then, to throw light on the meaning and the goals of Christian existence.

15. Cf. Carl E. Braaten, *The Flaming Center: A Theology of Christian Mission* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977) 134.

16. The correspondence is not accidental. Both *puruṣārthas* and 'vows' refer to the constitutive dimensions of a human existence: a person's relation to himself, to the other, and to the world—cf. Edward Pousset, "Human Existence and the Three Vows", *Review for Religious* 29 (1970) 211-37.

17. Cf. Vatican II, which in its decree on the renewal of religious life (*Perfectae Caritatis*), n. 2, proposes that "the fundamental norm of religious life is the following of Christ as proposed by the gospel".

a) Poverty or Artha?

The Gospels repeatedly demand the renunciation of possessions and of family ties as an indispensable condition for the following of Jesus (Mk 1, 16-20; 10, 12-21). Riches are strongly condemned as a mortal danger to salvation (Mk 10, 25). An abundance of possessions, it is urged, is no guarantee of a meaningful or a secure life (Lk 12, 13-21). Mammon is set in categorical opposition to God (Mt 6, 24).

This sustained warning against riches is not to be taken as a condemnation of material possessions as such, as if material things were a source of spiritual contamination. This is an idea deriving from gnostic dualism which may have infected some early Christian groups such as the Ebionites, but has little to do with the New Testament or with Jesus.¹⁸ There is no such 'asceticism' in the teaching of Jesus, who comes expressly "eating and drinking" (Mt 11, 18), and drawing lessons from "the birds in the sky and the wild flowers in the field" (Mt 6, 26-30) — enjoying, that is, to the full, the bounty and the beauty of nature. Rather, Jesus points to the ultimate triviality of all material things in face of the overwhelming reality of the revelation of God's love which is the 'Kingdom' (Mt 6, 33); and he warns against the obstacles that riches (material possessions accumulated as a source of security, comfort and power) can put in the way of experiencing God's love (Lk 12, 13-21) and of exercising inter-human concern (Lk 16, 19-31). Ultimately, it is freedom from the *tyranny* of possessions and the attitude of absolute trust in the providence of the Father that Jesus demands.

This demand of Jesus seems to have evoked little response in the post-Constantinian Church.¹⁹ In their attitude

18. Cf. Helmut Thielicke, *Theological Ethics, Volume I* (London: Black, 1968) 435: "The unity of man and the cosmos is regarded as so far reaching [in the New Testament] that there can be no thought of innocent man being led into evil by the badness of the world. That would be the view of Gnosticism according to which man, belonging to a divine and transcendent sphere, stands over against the fallen and anti godly world".

19. Note Dante's perceptive comment on the effect of Constantine's conversion on the Church. In his *Inferno*, XIX, 115-17 (Dorothy Sayers' translation) he complains:

Ah Constantine! What ills were gendered there —

No, not from thy conversion, but the dower

The first rich Pope received from thee as heir.

towards *artha* the Christian churches have been curiously ambivalent. They have proclaimed indeed vigorously the value of a simple life, lived in total dependence on the providence of God, and have attempted to realize this in the lives of individual religious, vowed to poverty, and often inspired by a strongly 'ascetical' reaction to the worldliness of a 'secular' Church.²⁰ But they have practised massive accumulation of institutional wealth all through the Middle Ages, when the monasteries were "incomparably the greatest landowners in Western Europe",²¹ and the Papacy waxed fat on feudal dues and extensive ecclesiastical taxation;²² while in modern times they have adjusted comfortably to the having-mode of bourgeois society, in which "the attainment of riches is the supreme object of human endeavour and the final criterion of human success".²³ Compromise is as impossible between the Church of Christ and the idolatry of riches which is the practical religion of capitalistic societies", R. H. Tawney suggests, "as it was between the Church and the State idolatry of the Roman Empire".²⁴ But the Christian Churches seem to have achieved this compromise without too much trouble.

b) Chastity or Kama ?

On sexual and emotional satisfaction as a goal of life (*kāma*) too, Christianity seems to have followed a rather winding path. Jesus himself stands squarely in the down-to-earth tradition of the Old Testament, which, in spite of the persistence of primitive taboos and of the male dominated attitudes of a patriarchal society, remained basically positive towards human sexuality: accepting it as a reality created by God and therefore good, though not sacred.²⁵ This positive, matter-of-

20. Friederich Heer, *The Mediaeval World*, trans. Janet Sondheimer (London: Sphere Books, 1974) 59: "Asceticism was the positive response of monasticism to the world outside: its rigours were intensified to match the increasing violence and affluence of secular life".

21. David C. Douglas, "The Development of Medieval Europe" in Edward Eyre (ed.), *European Civilization, Volume III* (Oxford University Press, 1935) 241.

22. *Ibid.*, 206-208 Cf. also the *Introduction to Contemporary Civilization in the West: A Source Book*, prepared at Columbia University (Columbia University Press, 1946) Vol. 1, 14-19.

23. R. H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (Narmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1938) 253.

24. *Ibid.*

25. O. J. Baab, art. "Sex, Sexual Behaviour", in *IDB IV* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962) 296-301.

fact acceptance of sexuality shines clearly through the relatively few sayings of Jesus on sex and marriage that we find in the Gospels (Mt 5, 27f; 5, 32; 19, 10-12; Mk 7, 22; 10, 2-12). The sayings are remarkable for their dispassionate openness and balance. They show no sign of prudery in their plain unvarnished utterance (cf. Mt 19, 12); and are far from that neurotic preoccupation with sex that will characterize so much later Christian teaching. Marriage is affirmed as an intimate inter-personal relationship ("the two shall become one person") in which man and woman find the natural fulfilment intended for them by God (Mk 10, 6-8). And though Jesus is himself a celibate defending his celibacy as an option for the Kingdom (Mt 19, 12),²⁶ and has disciples who have left home and perhaps family to follow him (Mk 10, 28-31 = My 19, 27-30 = Lk 18, 25-30), there is no suggestion that celibacy is the indispensable condition for following him; nor that it is in any way superior to marriage.

For the sexual ethic of Jesus (what little there is of it) is solidly rooted in an ethic of love. It is always inter-human concern that is central and determines ethical priorities. That is why Jesus will dine with tax collectors and prostitutes (Mk 2, 15; Lk 7, 36-50; Mt 21, 31) but excoriate the self-righteous Pharisees who "neglect justice and the love of God" (Lk 11, 42); he will, with exquisite tact, refuse to condemn a woman caught in adultery (Jn 8, 1-11), but solemnly curses the religious leaders of the people who sit indeed on "the chair of Moses" (and so exercise an official *magisterium*), but use their authority for self advancement at the expense of the ignorant and the powerless (Mt 23, 13-36).

Such concern leads Jesus to break new ground even in the very little he has to say on human sexuality. As against the decidedly inferior status given to women in the Old Testament and in rabbinic Judaism,²⁷ he affirms powerfully the equality of women, through word and through deed. His teachings on divorce challenges the 'double standard' obtaining in the Jewish society of his times, which demanded virginity of a bride (cf. Mt 1, 18-25) but not of the bridegroom; and which

26. Josef Blinzler suggests that the original setting of the saying was probably an attack on Jesus made by opponent) who ridiculed his unmarried state (unusual in Jews at the time) by calling him a eunuch. Jesus replies that there are eunuchs and eunuchs! — cf. his "'Eisin eunochoi'. Zur Auslegung von Mt 19, 12", *ZNW* 48 (1957) 254-70.

27. Cf. C. G. Montefiore and H. Loewe, *A Rabbinic Anthology*, (New York: Schocken Books, 1974) 507.

allowed a man to send away his unwanted wife without too much trouble, but not a woman to divorce her husband.²⁸ Jesus demands fidelity from both sexes, basing his demand not on some formal precept of the law but on the enduring character of human marital love itself (Mk 10, 2-12).

Towards women his own behaviour is free, secure and uncondescending — uninhibited by sexual anxieties or fears of what people might think (Jn 4, 27), and untainted by any attitude of male superiority. Women were his associates in his mission (Lk 8, 1-3), his trusted and loyal disciples (Mk 15, 40f; 15, 47; 16, 1-8) his close friends (Lk 10, 38-42; Jn 11, 5).²⁹ In a society where women were excluded from public life and worship, possessed no rights to property, and were entirely subject to their fathers when young and to their husbands when married,³⁰ this attitude of Jesus, "mild as it may seem to modern readers — or even reactionary", must have come with a shattering impact.³¹

It did not take long for the followers of Jesus to arrive at an attitude towards human sexuality very different from his. Already in the letters of Paul we notice the difference. Though Paul remains basically faithful to his Jewish tradition as interpreted and perfected by Jesus, his attitude towards sexuality is more cautious than Jesus' was. He defends indeed the legitimacy of marital intercourse against gnostic movements appearing in Corinth which called, apparently, for complete sexual abstinence among Christians (1 Cor 7, 1-7); and in Ephesians (which is Pauline even if not from Paul) proposes the union of man and woman in marriage as a symbol of the union of Christ and the Church (Eph 5, 21-33). But Paul himself announces his preference for celibacy which, in view of "the impending distress" (the time of eschatological troubles Paul was expecting), allowed, he believed, for greater religious commitment (1 Cor 7, 32-35).³² And while he clearly

28. Joachim Jeremias, *Jerusalem at the Time of Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1969) 370.

29. Cf. Anthony Kosnik and others, *Human Sexuality: New Directions in Catholic Thought* (London: Search Press, 1977) 19-20.

30. Jeremias, *Jerusalem* (n. 28 above) 359-76.

31. Charles R. Taber, art. "Sex, Sexual Behaviour", in *IDB Supplementary Volume* (Nashville: Abingdom, 1976) 817-19.

32. Cf. Francis X Cleary, "Women in the New Testament: St. Paul and the Early Pauline Churches", *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 10 (1980) 78-82, for a fine discussion of the attitude to women in 'authentic Paul' (Gal and 1 Cor), 'rewritten Paul' (Eph), 'ghost-written Paul' (1 Tim) and 'interpolated Paul' (1 Cor 14, 33-35).

affirms the equality of men and women in the new Christian dispensation (Gal 3, 28), he can still uphold the traditional Jewish view that a wife is subordinate to her husband (1 Cor 11, 3), and that women are to be excluded from an active role in public worship (1 Cor 1, 34).³³

But it is with the Hellenization of early Christianity (the perils of 'inculturation'!) that a negative view of human sexuality begins to dominate Christian theology. Both the Stoicism of the early Western Fathers and the Neo-Platonism of the later ones tended to depreciate sexuality — Stoicism because sexual pleasure came in the way of *apatheia*, the state of passionlessness proposed by the Stoics as the supreme ideal for the human person; and Neo-Platonism because it regarded sex as part of the material reality from which the spiritual soul (imprisoned in matter) was struggling to escape. Even Clement of Alexandria (214 A. D.), otherwise a strong defender of marriage against ascetic rigorism, allows the 'true gnostic' marital intercourse "only in order to obtain children, not to satisfy lust".³⁴ And with Augustine (†430 A. D.) bedevilled by his own guilt ridden sexual history and his long dalliance with Manichaeism (both leading him to an extremely pessimistic view of 'fallen' mankind), aversion to sexual pleasure reaches a point where every sexual act not explicitly intended for pro-creation is judged sinful.³⁵

The enormous influence of Augustine on subsequent Christian theology, accentuated by the celibate prejudice which inevitably coloured a moral theology elaborated until recently by celibate clerics, has maintained and even augmented this fear of sexuality, which shows itself in the Roman Catholic communion in an exaggerated evaluation of celibacy

33. Cf. Neal M. Flanagan, "Did Paul Put Down Women in 1 Cor 14, 34-36", *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 11 (1981) 10-12 for a good introduction into the problems of this much discussed passage.

34. *Stromateis*, 6.12.100.3 — cited in Eric Osborn, *Ethical Patterns in Early Christian Thought* (Cambridge University Press, 1976) 64.

35. Cf. Augustine, *The Good of Marriage*, VI. 6: "In marriage, intercourse for the purpose of generation has no fault attached to it, but for the purpose of satisfying concupiscence, provided with a spouse, because of the marriage fidelity, it is a venial sin (!); adultery or fornication however, is mortal sin. And so, continence from all intercourse is certainly better than marital intercourse itself which takes place for the sake of begetting children" — quoted in Donald Georgen, *The Sexual Celibate* (New York: Seabury Press, 1974) 40.

(so that celibacy becomes the indispensable condition for all ecclesiastical office!), and, elsewhere too, in an obsession with sexuality that gives a disproportionate importance to sexual sins. "Most moralists", writes Bertrand Russel, "have been so obsessed by sex that they have laid too little emphasis on other more socially useful kinds of ethically commendable behaviour".³⁶ Sexual deviation, not social exploitation has till very recently been the consuming interest of Christian moral theology — a curious inversion of the priorities of Jesus!

c) Obedience or Dharma?

In his attitude towards the religious and ethical observances of his people (their *dharma*) Jesus shows remarkable freedom and flexibility. He associates with religious outcasts much to the scandal of the pious (Mk 2, 15-17; Lk 15, 1-2). His repeated violation of the Sabbath rest so arouses the rage of the law-obsessed Pharisees that they are prepared to put him to death (Mk 3, 1-6): His disciples do not fast (Mk 2,18), nor do they observe the laws of ritual cleanliness (Mk 7, 1-2) — and Jesus defends them vigorously, arguing against the need for bodily asceticism in the new age of messianic joy he has inaugurated (Mk 2, 18-22),³⁷ and rejecting out of hand all distinctions between 'clean' and 'unclean', because these derive from an unwarranted dualism which separates areas in the world which are 'sacred' from others which are 'profane'.³⁸ The Sabbath is made for man not man for the Sabbath (Mk 2, 27); nothing is in itself unclean (Rom 14, 14 referring to Mk 7, 15); mercy is more important than sacrifice (Mt 9,13)—these are some of the great liberating principles enunciated by Jesus, in which law and cult are radically subordinated to love. It is love of God showing itself in love for neighbour which, according to Matthew, is the "basis of all the law and the prophets" (Mt 22,40); and which, according to Mark, is "much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices" (Mk 12,33). Law is valid only inasmuch as it is an expression of God's will which is not just our 'peace' but our 'well being'. For what

36. Bertrand Russel, *Why I am Not a Christian* (London: Unwin Paperbacks, 1977) 122.

37. Note how fasting is re-introduced by the post-Easter community and justified by the addition of v. 20 (a clear community expansion) to the original saying of Jesus.

38. Cf. Bernard Häring, *Free and Faithful in Christ, Volume I* (Middlegreen: St. Paul Publications, 1978) 100 for the dangers inherent in the separation of the realm of the sacred from that of the profane.

God wills is inter-human concern (Jn 13,33; 15,12). Cult is meaningful only as a celebration of love and not as an alibi for social neglect (Mt 9,13; 12,7). Formal obedience to the law as a set of static, unchanging ethical and ritual precepts is replaced, by Jesus with *radical obedience* to the will of God, which cannot be codified, but which demands through careful attention to the signs of the times the constant discernment of what is the most loving thing to do.³⁹

The community of Jesus finds it difficult to live up to such radical obedience and quickly lapses into much the same sort of legalism and ritualism that Jesus so strongly attacked. The Sabbath comes back in force, imposing its heavy burden of 'mortal sin' on those who 'miss Sunday mass' or do 'servile work'. Laws proliferate, regulating in minute detail forms of clerical dress and shapes of ritual action and defining with absolute precision what is permitted and what is not in the fields of social and sexual morality.⁴⁰ All is grist to the moralists' mill! An intense casuistry develops, rivalling in ingenuity the intricate halakhic midrash of the rabbis. And if the rules of ritual cleanliness are finally abandoned (not without a struggle—cf Gal 2,11-14; Rom 14,1-23), a new ritualism creeps in as meticulous as the old.

Sacral places re-appear, so that God is no longer worshipped "in spirit and in truth" (that is, through a cult validated not by the sanctity of the place in which it is performed, but by the presence of the spirit in the community of worshippers),⁴¹ but in 'consecrated sanctuaries'—new Jerusalems and Gerizims! Sacral persons, unknown in the New Testament (where no Christian minister is ever called a *hier-eus* or *sacerdos*, in the sense of a sacred person 'set aside' for worship),⁴² appear again complete with titles (like *Pontifex Maximus*), derived from the pagan Roman cult. Rituals are elaborated, solidify and develop a momentum of their own, persisting long after their symbolism is forgotten—so that, because of an ill-formulated and badly understood theory of *ex opere operato*, which locates the efficacy of a ritual in the ritual

39. Cf. my "The Dharma of Jesus: An Interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount", *Biblehashyam* 6 (1980) 358-81 (sp. 375-78); and Rudolf Bultmann, *Jesus and the word* (London: Fontana 1958) 58-67.

40. Cf. Häring, *Free & Faithful* (n. 38 above) 45-49.

41. Raymond Brown. *The Gospel According to John*, Vol. I (New York: Doubleday, 1966) 180.

42. Cf. G. Schrenk, art. "Hier-eus", in *TDNT* III (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965) 263-65.

action itself, they become quasi magical rites in which the appropriate gesture and correct work ('matter and form') are believed to produce the desired effect, independently of the disposition of the 'minister' or the involvement of the participant.⁴³ Radical obedience to God's will manifested in the 'signs of the times' is replaced by formal conformity to fixed unchanging ethical and ritual laws.

C. The Meaning and the Goals of Christian Existence

This development of the Christian 'ideals', due largely to the over institutionalization of the original Christian charism, has succeeded in domesticating even the religious - supposedly the prophetic leaven living in creative and challenging tension with the institutional Church.⁴⁴ It has tended to obscure the real significance of these religious ideals as indicators of the meaning and the goals of Christian existence. For, properly understood, these 'ideals' (poverty, chastity, obedience) do not define negative attitudes. They are not designations of an ascetic lifestyle with its 'contempt for the world', its aversion to sexuality, and its fear of freedom'. Whatever may be the way in which they have been and continue to be understood and lived, they are, in fact, highly positive in their orientation. They are expressions of the specific Christian freedom (the "glorious freedom of the children of God" of which Paul speaks in Rom 8, 21) which derives from the core Christian experience of God's unconditional love.

The core religious experience of the Christian is his experience of the absolute as love: in Gospel language, the experience of God as *abba*, 'dear Father'.⁴⁵ This experience is radically liberating. It 'fulfils' a person, satisfying his basic human needs of acceptance and achievement, the need to be loved and to love. The person liberated by this experience of

43. Cf. Louis Bouyer, *Rite and Man: The Sense of the Sacrament and Christian Liturgy* (London: Burns & Oates 1963) 58-59.

44. Cf. Häring, *Free & Faithful* (n. 38 above) 46-47: "When the patristic and medieval tradition on natural law was presented in this new framework, it became deeply affected by a legalistic tendency. The emphasis was no longer on the law inborn in man and discovered by conscience in the reciprocity of consciences, but rather on the authoritative decision of what natural law prescribes for all people of all times".

45. Cf. Johannes B. Metz, *Followers of Christ: The Religious Life and the Church* (London: Burns & Oates, 1978) 11-17.

46. Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology, Volume I* (London: SCM Press, 1971) 67-68.

the unconditional love of God is freed (as the *jivanmukta* is freed by the realization of his identity with the absolute and his nonidentity with the empirical self) from the tyranny of persons and things. He no longer needs to look for fulfilment through possessing things, or clinging to emotional attachments, or by asserting himself. Love has relativized all. He has passed from the having mode to the being-mode of existence.⁴⁷ He is spontaneously 'poor', 'chaste', obedient'. He is truly free.

But his freedom does not stop here. Such 'freedom from' is, in the perspective of the New Testament, only the first moment in the dialectic of freedom, which to be complete must reach beyond this moment of self-fulfilment to the fulfilment of others. There can be no genuine individual freedom without communitarian and societal liberation as well – for no man is an island, but is always part of the main. The 'freedom from' which results from the core experience of love is equally a 'freedom for' love. Paul has expressed this splendidly in his striking dialectic of freedom and slavery. 'You were called to freedom, brothers and sisters', he writes to the Christians of Galatia, "only do not let this freedom become an occasion for self-indulgence, but through love be slaves of one another" (Gal 5, 13); And of himself too he can say: 'for though I am free from all men, I have made myself the slave of all, in order to win over as many as possible' (1 Cor 9, 19). One becomes free in order to (freely) make oneself a slave! To be a 'free slave' is, in understanding of the New Testament, the paradoxical definition of a fulfilled human existence.

The ultimate basis for this understanding of human existence is the biblical vision of the human person and of the world he lives in. The human person in the Bible is essentially communitarian. He is a relational being, finding his identity only as a member of the group to which he belongs, ultimately only as part of the whole human race. That is why 'man' (*hā 'ādām*) in the Bible is also 'mankind', and why the feature most used to refer to him is his 'face' (*pānim*), since it is this that best expresses 'man's turning towards another'; and since the plural form in which it is always used (*pānim* is the plural of *pāneh*) reminds us of "the manifold ways in which man gives attention (*pnh*) to his counterpart".⁴⁸

So understood, mankind is for the Bible the crown and the centre of the world he lives in. This world is experienced

47. Erich Fromm, *To Have and to Be* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1978) 1-12.

48. Hans Walter Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1974) 74.

as 'creation', that is as a continuing movement from chaos to cosmos, wholly dependent on the power and will of God. The biblical universe is not a stable organized system (like the universe of Ptolemy), but (rather like the universe of Einstein!) a precarious process in which order progressively emerges from disorder as the powerful forces of chaos are steadily pushed back. And since the Bible does not make a sharp distinction between nature and history, this movement from chaos to cosmos is projected into the history of mankind. Human history continues creation, or equivalently, creation is the 'beginning' of the saving history of mankind. Both are moments in a single movement from chaos to cosmos, leading up to the final liberation of 'man'; that is, to the emergence of a liberated human community living in perfect harmony with itself and with the world it inhabits (Is 11, 1-9; 65, 17-25; Rev 21, 1-4).

In this dramatic process of 'creation', mankind has a central place. Not only is the human community the summit of creation, it is also its principal agent. This is expressed emphatically in the extraordinarily beautiful creation myth of Gen 1, 1-2, 4 in which the Priestly author of the Pentateuch, writing to a people plunged into the 'chaos' of the Babylonian exile assures them of ultimate triumph by affirming that mankind has been created in the 'image and the likeness' of God, in order to take control of the world which has been fashioned for him.

So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.
And God blessed them, and God said to them:
'Be fruitful and multiply
and fill the earth and subdue it;
and have dominion over the fish of the sea
and over the birds of the air
and over every living thing that moves
upon the earth.

(Gen 1, 27-28)

It is evident that this "central kerygmatic assertion" of the Priestly tradition,⁴⁹ speaks primarily of a task entrusted to mankind. However one understands the rather obscure designation of "image" (*selem*) and "likeness" (*demut*),⁵⁰ it is clear

49. Walter Brueggemann, "The Kerygma of the Priestly Writers", *ZAW* 84 (1972) 400.

50. For a short but competent discussion of the various ways in which the expression has been understood, cf. Oswald Loretz *Schöpfung und Mythos* (Stuttgart: KBW, 1968) 66-69.

that the "text speaks less of the nature of God's image than of its purpose: there is less said about the gift itself than about the task".⁵¹ The commission to exercise dominion over the world is at least a consequence if not indeed the actual content of mankind's assimilation to "the image and the likeness" of God.⁵² This commission is entrusted to mankind, not to individual men (for "dominion over the world is not to be made over to great individuals but to the community"),⁵³ and indeed to mankind as "male and female" - an astonishing affirmation of the value of human sexuality and of the equality and complementarity of the sexes. It is given too in the form of a blessing, formulated in five verbs (be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, subdue, have dominion), which, for all their danger (not unrealized) of inculcating in mankind an aggressive, demiurgic attitude towards nature, are yet a great charter of responsibility and hope. For the verbs affirm God's immutable intention to "establish his will for [mankind's] well-being and prosperity" and they entrust mankind with the responsibility of working out this intention of God.⁵⁴

This call to enter actively into the process of creation as God's agent in 'humanizing' the world is an essential dimension of human existence, as the Bible understands it. At the depth of his being each human person experiences the summons to "co-create with God a community of ordered life".⁵⁵ The Christian 'ideals' of poverty, chastity and obedience, then, cannot be taken as merely negative affirmations of a person's freedom from the bondage of attachment to persons and things. They are primarily conditions of availability, making it possible for a person to dedicate himself to the compelling task of creating a more human world. "Man's life", writes Charles Curran, "does not come to him as a completed whole, but, rather, man has the task and vocation of becoming more of a man and making more human the world in which he lives."⁵⁶ It is in this task of making a more human world

51. Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis* (London: SCM Press, rev. ed. 1972) 59.

52. Wolff, *Anthropology* (n. 48 above) 160: "It is precisely in his function as ruler that he is God's image".

53. *Ibid.*, 161.

54. Brueggemann, *Priestly Writers*" (n. 49 above) 401.

55. Michael H. Crosby, *Spirituality of the Beatitudes: Matthew's Challenge for First World Christians* (New York; Orbis Books, 1981) 13.

56. Charles Curran, quoted in Häring, *Free & Faithful* (n. 38 above) 100.

that the ultimate goal of human existence here and now (as the Christian sees it) is to be found. For this task is merely the spelling out of the 'love-commandment' (Mk 12, 28-34; Jn 13, 34), which defines the supreme value of Christian life. Indeed, in the light of this commandment, one might well ask whether the quest for 'Christian *puruṣārthas*' is meaningful at all. For it is the great paradox of the Christian way that a person finds his life (and so achieves his life-goals), only when he is prepared to lose it (Lk 17, 33)!

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DISCUSSION FORUM

Has Panikkar Rightly Understood Rahner?

The dialogue between Raimundo Panikkar and Abraham Koothottil published under the title "Man and Religion: A Dialogue with Panikkar" (*Jeevadhara*, Theology Centre, Kottayam, India, January February 1981, vol. XI, No. 61, pp. 5-31) is indeed informative and interesting. From reading Panikkar's occasional reference to and criticism of Rahner's concept of 'anonymous Christianity', I got the impression that Panikkar has not properly understood Rahner on the matter.

Panikkar says: "[...] I told Rahner a few years ago in a meeting as he spoke for the first time of anonymous Christianity, that I could accept the thrust of all what he said provided he accepted also that he was an anonymous Buddhist." (*Ibid.* p. 20)

At the first glance Panikkar's position seems to carry weight and reason. But on close observation his position begins to lose ground. Let us pay special attention to the condition put forward by Panikkar, namely, *provided Rahner accepted also that he (Rahner) was an anonymous Buddhist* (Cf. *ibid.*). The way the adverb 'also' is used in his statement seems to be generously vague and slightly misleading. An ordinary reader who may not be an expert in English could understand

it in two ways. In either case the suggested implication is wrong. The 'also' in the above context could be understood as implying:

a) that Rahner has demanded a similar act of acceptance from the part of non-Christians as to their being anonymous Christians. But Rahner has not done it and will never do it for reasons to be shown later.

b) that Rahner should accept himself as an anonymous Buddhist *besides* his accepting himself as a Christian. But such a double acceptance would imply for Rahner a self contradiction. How could then Panikkar ask Rahner to accept a self-contradictory statement unless owing to lack of correct understanding of what Rahner really meant?

Before proceeding further let us keep in mind that Rahner's *concept* of anonymous Christianity is the outcome of his attempt to reconcile two Christian beliefs, the belief in Christ as *the* unique saviour of mankind on the one side and the belief in God's universal salvific will on the other side, taking into consideration the existence of innumerable non-Christians and non-Christian religions. Somebody who does not or will not accept the concept of anonymous Christianity, without at the same time suggesting the possibility of another way of reconciling the above two beliefs, is really questioning either both of the beliefs or at least one of them.

According to Rahner "anonymous Christianity" is not a concept meant *for* non-Christians, but *about* non-Christians. It is a concept developed by him in order to explain to himself and to his fellow-Christians who can share with him the above mentioned two Christian beliefs, the 'How' of the possibility of salvation for non-Christians. We could say that it is an *inter nos* concept. Rahner would therefore never ask a non-Christian to accept that he is an anonymous Christian. He is not going to tell a non-Christian: "You are an anonymous Christian. You have to accept it." But if a non-Christian can attain salvation, then he cannot but be an anonymous Christian: that is the way how Rahner would conceive of it. Let us here note the difference between the two ways of expressions with the *you* and the *he* sentences.

Let us now suppose that the Buddhists would believe in Buddhism as *the* unique way of salvation for human beings and at the same time would accept the possibility of salvation for non-Buddhists. If this were so, and only then, a Buddhist who would think over the matter could reasonably consider the non-Buddhists who would be saved as anonymous Buddhists. One who thinks logically could not object to it, though one

could question the belief of the Buddhists. Now if a Buddhist would tell me directly that I am an anonymous Buddhist—only then I would know for certain that I am considered so - then I might thank him for his optimistic appraisal of myself. I would be for him somebody on *the* right path to salvation. The atmosphere changes if he asks me to accept myself as an anonymous Buddhist. So long as I believe in Christ as the unique saviour and mediator of mankind, as the only Son of God and the only way to the Father, I cannot accept myself as an anonymous Buddhist thereby contradicting my belief in the unique salvific role of Christ.

If someone would believe in *many* Divine Saviours then he would not need either the concept of anonymous Christianity or the concept of anonymous Buddhism in order to understand the salvation of non-Christians or of non Buddhists as the case may be. It is precisely because Rahner believes in Christ as the *only* mediator of salvation for *each and every* human being that he postulates and advocates the concept of anonymous Christianity.

Lastly, there seems to be a flaw in Panikkar's thinking when he is said to have "retorted" Rahner by telling him that if Rahner did not know much about Buddhism "he should not call a Buddhist an anonymous Christian either" (ibid). As far as I know, Rahner has never claimed "much" knowledge about other religions, let alone Buddhism, as the ground for his calling anybody, if at all, an anonymous Christian. It is not the "much" knowledge about other religions, but the "much" knowledge of his own religion that provides Rahner with the substratum of his concept of anonymous Christianity.

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